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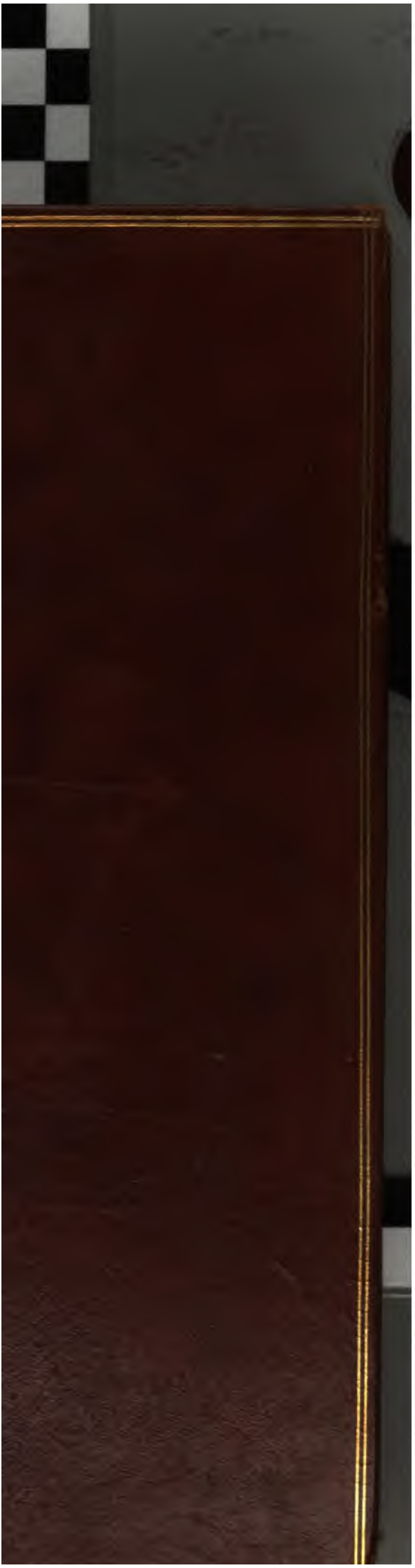

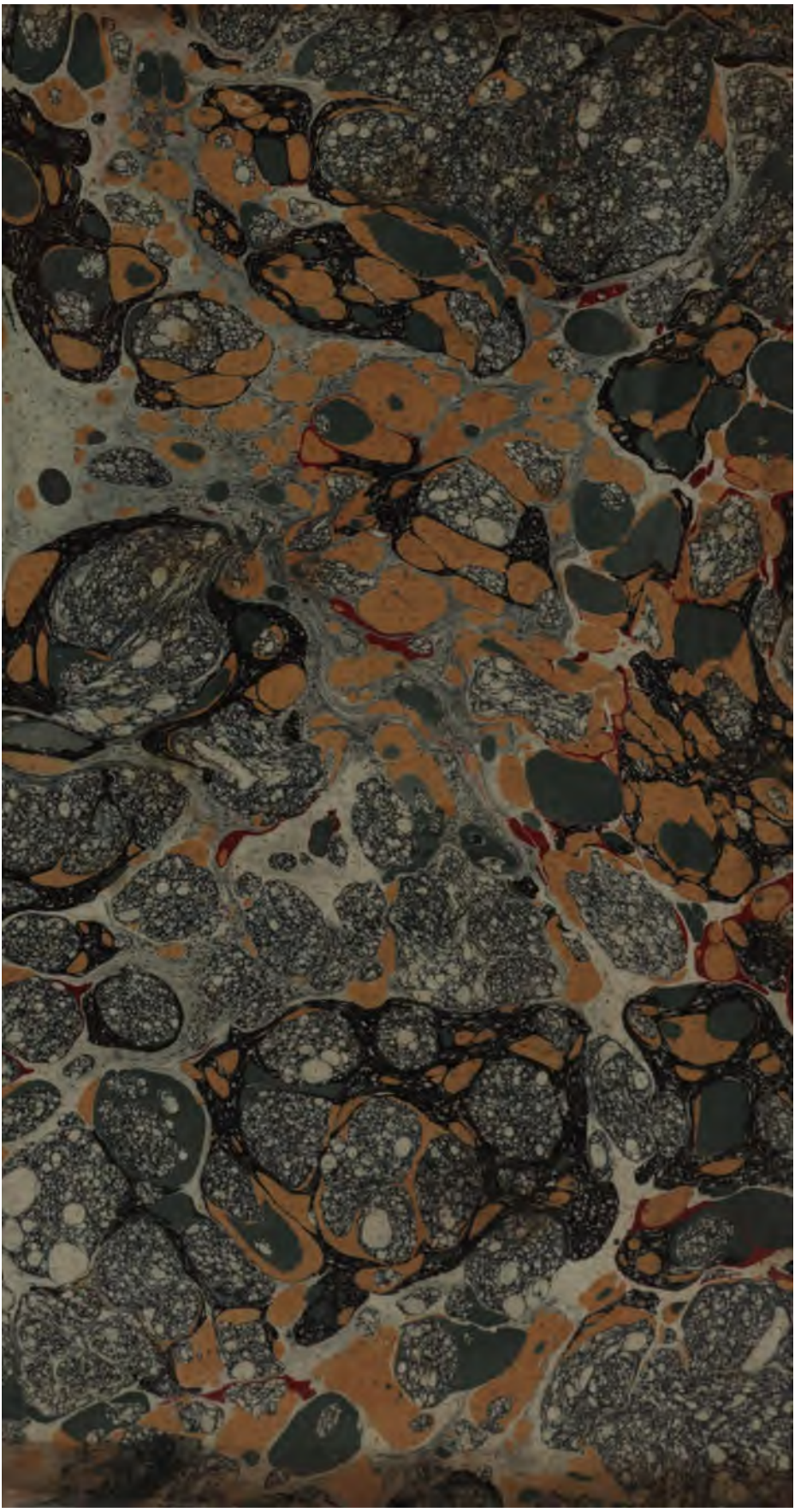

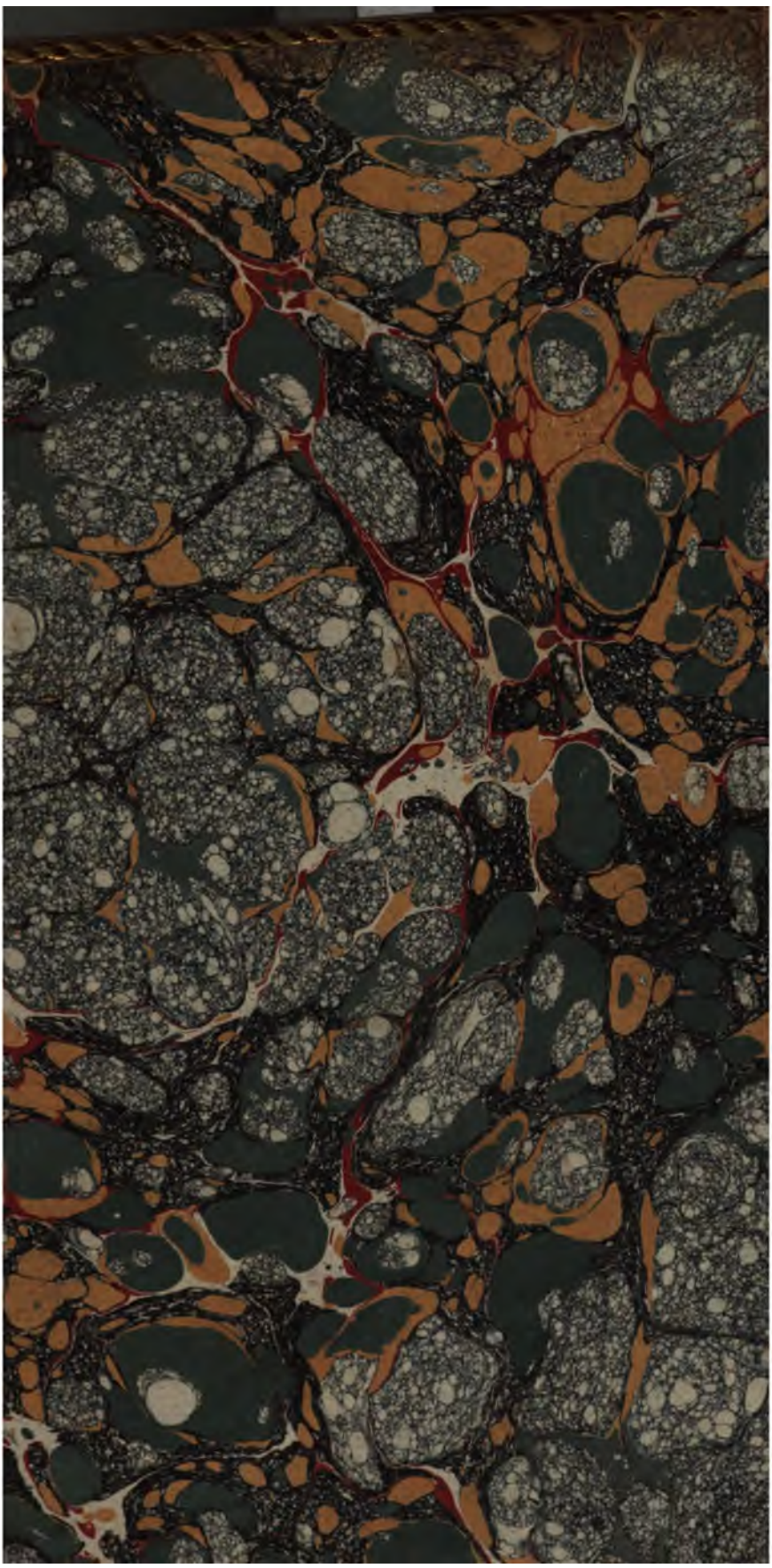

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THE

WORKS

OF THE

REV. JONATHAN SWIFT, D. D.,

DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S, DUBLIN.

ARRANGED BY THOMAS SHERIDAN, A. M.

WITH

NOTES, HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL.

A NEW EDITION, IN NINETEEN VOLUMES;

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A PROPOSAL

A PROPOSAL*

FOR THE

UNIVERSAL USE

OF

IRISH MANUFACTURE,

IN CLOTHES AND FURNITURE OF HOUSES, ETC. UTTERLY REJECTING AND RENOUNCING EVERY THING WEARABLE THAT COMES FROM ENGLAND,

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1720.

IT is the peculiar felicity and prudence of the people in this kingdom, that whatever commodities or productions lie under the greatest discouragements from England, thoſe are what they are sure to be most industrious in cultivating and spreading. Agriculture, which has been the principal care of all wise nations, and for the encouragement whereof there are so many statute laws in England, we countenance so well, that the landlords are every where, by penal clauses, absolutely prohibiting their tenants

* This proposal was answered, and our author severely censured, in a pamphlet published directly after it, entitled, "A Defence of *English* Commodities."

from ploughing*; not satisfied to confine them within certain limitations, as is the practice of the English: one effect of which is already seen in the prodigious dearness of corn, and the importation of it from London, as the cheaper market. And because people are the riches of a country, and that our neighbours have done, and are doing, all that in them lies to make our wool a drug to us, and a monopoly to them; therefore the politick gentlemen of Ireland have depopulated vast tracts of the best land, for the feeding of sheep.

I could fill a volume as large as the history of the wise men of Gotham, with a catalogue only of some wonderful laws and customs, we have observed within thirty years past. It is true indeed, our beneficial traffick of wool with France, has been our only support for several years, furnishing us with all the little money we have to pay our rents, and go to market. But our merchants assure me, this trade has received a great damp by the present fluctuating condition of the coin in France; that most of their wine is paid for in species, without carrying thither any commodity from hence.

However, since we are so universally bent upon enlarging our flocks, it may be worth inquiring, what we shall do with our wool, in case Barnstable†

* It was the practice of Irish farmers to wear out their ground with ploughing, neither manuring nor letting it lie fallow, and when their leases were near expired, they ploughed even the meadows, and made such havock, that the landlords by their zeal to prevent it were betrayed into this pernicious measure.

† A sea port in Devonshire, at that time the principal market in England for Irish wool.

should

should be overstocked, and our French commerce should fail?

I could wish the parliament had thought fit to have suspended their regulation of church matters, and enlargements of the prerogative, until a more convenient time, because they did not appear very pressing, at least to the persons principally concerned; and, instead of these great refinements in politicks and divinity, had amused themselves and their committees a little with the state of the nation. For example: what if the house of commons had thought fit to make a resolution, *nemine contradicente*, against wearing any cloth or stuff in their families, which were not of the growth and manufacture of this kingdom? What if they had extended it so far as utterly to exclude all silks, velvets, callicoes, and the whole lexicon of female fopperies; and declared, that whoever acted otherwise should be deemed and reputed an enemy to the nation? What if they had sent up such a resolution to be agreed to by the house of lords; and by their own practice and encouragement, spread the execution of it in their several countries? What if we should agree to make burying in woollen a fashion, as our neighbours have made it a law? What if the ladies would be content with Irish stuffs for the furniture of their houses, for gowns and petticoats for themselves and their daughters? Upon the whole, and to crown all the rest, let a firm resolution be taken by male and female, never to appear with one single shred that comes from England; and let all the people say, AMEN.

I hope and believe, nothing could please his majesty better than to hear that his loyal subjects of both sexes in this kingdom celebrated his birth-day (now approaching) universally clad in their own manufacture *. Is there virtue enough left in this deluded people, to save them from the brink of ruin? If the men's opinions may be taken, the ladies will look as handsome in stuffs as in brocades; and since all will be equal, there may be room enough to employ their wit and fancy, in choosing and matching patterns and colours. I heard the late archbishop of Tuam mention a pleasant observation of some body's; that Ireland would never be happy, till a law were made for burning every thing that came from England, except their people and their coals. I must confess, that as to the former, I should not be sorry if they would stay at home; and for the latter, I hope, in a little time we shall have no occasion for them.

Non tanti mitra est, non tanti judicis ostrum——

but I should rejoice to see a staylace from England be thought scandalous, and become a topick for censure at visits and teatables.

If the unthinking shopkeepers in this town, had not been utterly destitute of common sense, they would have made some proposal to the parliament, with a petition to the purpose I have mentioned; promising to improve the cloths and stuffs of the nation into all possible degrees of fineness

* Her grace the duchess of Dorset, the lord lieutenant's lady, is said to have appeared at the Castle in Dublin wholly clad in the manufacture of Ireland, on his majesty's birth day, 1753.

and

and colours, and engaging not to play the knave, according to their custom, by exacting and imposing upon the nobility and gentry, either as to the prices or the goodness. For I remember, in London, upon a general mourning, the rascally mercers and woollendrapers would in four and twenty hours raise their cloths and silks to above a double price; and if the mourning continued long, then come whining with petitions to the court, that they were ready to starve, and their fineries lay upon their hands.

I could wish our shopkeepers would immediately think on this proposal, addressing it to all persons of quality and others; but first be sure to get somebody who can write sense, to put it into form.

I think it needless to exhort the clergy to follow this good example; because in a little time, those among them, who are so unfortunate as to have had their birth and education in this country, will think themselves abundantly happy, when they can afford Irish crape, and an Athlone hat; and as to the others, I shall not presume to direct them. I have indeed seen the present archbishop of Dublin* clad from head to foot in our own manufacture; and yet, under the rose be it spoken, his grace deserves as good a gown as if he had not been born among us.

I have not courage enough to offer one syllable on this subject to their honours of the army; neither have I sufficiently considered the great importance of scarlet and gold lace.

* Doctor KING.

The fable in Ovid of Arachne and Pallas is to this purpose. The goddess had heard of one Arachne, a young virgin very famous for spinning and weaving: they both met upon a trial of skill; and Pallas finding herself almost equalled in her own art, stung with rage and envy, knocked her rival down, and turned her into a spider; enjoining her to spin and weave for ever out of her own bowels, and in a very narrow compass. I confess, that from a boy I always pitied poor Arachne, and could never heartily love the goddess, on account of so cruel and unjust a sentence; which however is fully executed upon us by England, with farther additions of rigour and severity; for the greatest part of our bowels and vitals is extracted, without allowing us the liberty of spinning and weaving them.

The Scripture tells us that oppression makes a wise man mad; therefore consequently speaking, the reason why some men are not mad, is because they are not wise: however it were to be wished, that oppression would in time teach a little wisdom to fools.

I was much delighted with a person, who has a great estate in this kingdom, upon his complaints to me, how grievously poor England suffers by impositions from Ireland: that we convey our own wool to France, in spite of all the harpies at the custom-house: that Mr. Shuttleworth, and others on the Cheshire coasts, are such fools to sell us their bark at a good price for tanning our own hides into leather, with other enormities of the like weight and kind. To which I will venture to add more: that the mayoralty of this city is always executed by an inhabitant,

inhabitant, and often by a native, which might as well be done by a deputy with a moderate salary, whereby poor England loses at least one thousand pounds a year upon the balance: that the governing of this kingdom costs the lord lieutenant three thousand six hundred pounds a year; so much net loss to poor England: that the people of Ireland presume to dig for coals in their own grounds; and the farmers in the county of Wicklow send their turf to the very market of Dublin, to the great discouragement of the coal trade of Mostyn and Whitehaven*: that the revenues of the postoffice here, so righteously belonging to the English treasury, as arising chiefly from our own commerce with each other, should be remitted to London clogged with that grievous burden of exchange; and the pensions paid out of the Irish revenues to English favourites, should lie under the same disadvantage, to the great loss of the grantees. When a divine is sent over to a bishoprick here, with the hopes of five and twenty hundred pounds a year; and upon his arrival he finds, alas! a dreadful discount of ten or twelve per cent: a judge, or a commissioner of the revenue has the same cause of complaint. Lastly, The ballad upon Cotter is vehemently suspected to be Irish manufacture; and yet is allowed to be sung in our open streets, under the very nose of the government.

These are a few among the many hardships we put upon that poor kingdom of England; for which, I am confident, every honest man wishes a remedy: and I hear, there is a project on foot, for trans-

* Mostyn in Flintshire, and Whitehaven in Cumberland.

porting our best wheaten straw by sea and land carriage to Dunstable; and obliging us by a law to take off yearly so many ton of straw hats, for the use of our women; which will be a great encouragement to the manufacture of that industrious town.

I should be glad to learn among the divines, whether a law to bind men without their own consent be obligatory *in foro conscientiæ*; because I find, Scripture, Sanderson, and Suarez, are wholly silent on the matter. The oracle of reason, the great law of nature, and general opinion of civilians, whereever they treat of limited governments, are indeed decisive enough.

It is wonderful to observe the bias among our people in favour of things, persons, and wares, of all kinds, that come from England. The printer tells his hawkers, that he has got an excellent new song just brought from London. I have somewhat of a tendency that way myself; and upon hearing a coxcomb from thence displaying himself with great volubility upon the park, the playhouse, the opera, the gaming-ordinaries, it was apt to beget in me a kind of veneration for his parts and accomplishments. It is not many years, since I remember a person, who by his style and literature seems to have been the corrector of a hedge-press in some blind alley about Little Britain, proceed gradually to be an author, at least a translator* of a lower rate, although somewhat of a larger bulk, than any that now flourishes in Grub-street; and upon the

* Supposed to be Cæsar's Commentaries, dedicated to the duke of Marlborough, by col. Bladen.

strength

strength of this foundation come over here, erect himself up into an orator and politician, and lead a kingdom after him. This, I am told, was the very motive that prevailed on the author* of a play called, 'Love in a hollow Tree,' to do us the honour of a visit; presuming, with very good reason, that he was a writer of a superiour class. I know another, who for thirty years past has been the common standard of stupidity in England, where he was never heard a minute in any assembly, or by any party, with common Christian treatment; yet upon his arrival here, could put on a face of importance and authority, talk more than six, without either gracefulness, propriety, or meaning; and at the same time be admired and followed as the pattern of eloquence and wisdom.

Nothing has humbled me so much, or shown a greater disposition to a contemptuous treatment of Ireland, in some chief governors, than that high style of several speeches from the throne, delivered as usual after the royal assent, in some periods of the two last reigns. Such exaggerations of the prodigious condescensions in the prince to pass those good laws, would have but an odd sound at Westminster: neither do I apprehend how any good law can pass, wherein the king's interest is not as much concerned as that of the people. I remember, after a speech on the like occasion delivered by my lord Wharton†, (I think it was his last) he desired Mr. Addison to ask my opinion on it: my answer was, That his excellency had very honestly forfeited his head, on account of one paragraph; wherein he asserted, by plain consequence, a dispensing power

* L. Grimston. † Lord lieutenant.

in

in the queen. His lordship owned it was true, but swore the words were put into his mouth by direct orders from court. Whence it is clear, that some ministers in those times were apt from their high elevation, to look down upon this kingdom, as if it had been one of their colonies of outcasts in America. And I observed a little of the same turn of spirit in some great men from whom I expected better; although to do them justice, it proved no kind of difficulty to make them correct their idea, whereof the whole nation quickly found the benefit. ——But that is forgotten. How the style has since run, I am wholly a stranger; having never seen a speech since the last of the queen.

I would now expostulate a little with our country landlords; who, by unmeasurable screwing and racking their tenants all over the kingdom, have already reduced the miserable people to a worse condition than the peasants in France, or the vassals in Germany and Poland; so that the whole species of what we call substantial farmers, will, in a very few years, be utterly at an end. It was pleasant to observe these gentlemen, labouring with all their might, for preventing the bishops from letting their revenues at a moderate half value, (whereby the whole order would, in an age, have been reduced to manifest beggary) at the very instant when they were every where canting* their own land upon short leases, and sacrificing their oldest tenants for a penny an acre advance. I know not how it comes to pass (and yet perhaps I know well enough) that slaves have a natural disposition to be tyrants; and that when my

* Canting their land is letting it to the highest bidder—cant signifies the same as auction.

betters

betters give me a kick, I am apt to revenge it with six upon my footman; although perhaps he may be an honest and diligent fellow. I have heard great divines affirm, that nothing is so likely to call down a universal judgment from Heaven upon a nation, as universal oppression; and whether this be not already verified in part, their worships the landlords are now at full leisure to consider. Whoever travels this country, and observes the face of nature, or the faces and habits and dwellings of the natives, will hardly think himself in a land, where law, religion, or common humanity is professed.

I cannot forbear saying one word upon a thing they call a bank, which I hear is projecting in this town*. I never saw the proposals, nor understand any one particular of their scheme: what I wish for at present, is only a sufficient provision of hemp, and caps and bells, to distribute† according to the several degrees of honesty and prudence in some persons. I hear only of a monstrous sum already named; and if OTHERS do not soon hear of it too, and hear with a vengeance, then I am a gentleman of less sagacity, than myself, and a very few beside, take me to be. And the jest will be still the better, if it be true, as judicious persons have assured me, that one half is altogether imaginary. The matter will be likewise much mended, if the merchants continue to carry off our gold, and our goldsmiths to melt down our heavy silver.

* This project for a bank in Ireland was soon afterward brought into parliament and rejected.

† It should be—to 'be distributed.'

A LETTER

A

LETTER

TO THE

SHOPKEEPERS, TRADESMEN, FARMERS, AND COMMON PEOPLE

OF

IRELAND,

CONCERNING

THE BRASS HALFPENCE

COINED BY ONE

WILLIAM WOOD, HARDWAREMAN,

WITH A DESIGN TO HAVE THEM PASS IN THIS KINGDOM.

WHEREIN IS SHOWN

The Power of his *Patent*, the Value of his *Halfpence*, and how far every Person may be obliged to take the same in Payments, and how to behave himself, in case such an Attempt should be made by Wood, or any other Person.

(Very proper to be kept in every Family.)

BY M. B. DRAPIER.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1724.

you know, or inquire, or care, who are your friends, or who are your enemies.

About four years ago a little book was written, to advise all people to wear the manufactures of this our own dear country *. It had no other design, said nothing against the king or parliament, or any person whatsoever; yet the poor printer was prosecuted two years with the utmost violence, and even some weavers themselves (for whose sake it was written) being upon the JURY, found him guilty. This would be enough to discourage any man from endeavouring to do you good, when you will either neglect him, or fly in his face for his pains, and when he must expect only danger to himself, and to be fined and imprisoned, perhaps to his ruin.

However, I cannot but warn you once more of the manifest destruction before your eyes, if you do not behave yourselves as you ought.

I will therefore first tell you the plain story of the fact; and then I will lay before you how you ought to act, in common prudence, according to the laws of your country.

The fact is this: It having been many years, since COPPER HALFPENCE OR FARTHINGS were last coined in this kingdom, they have been for some time very scarce, and many counterfeits passed about under the name of raps; several applications were made to England, that we might have liberty to coin new ones, as in former times we did; but they did not succeed. At last one Mr. Wood, a mean ordinary man, a hardware-dealer, procured a patent under his majesty's broad seal to coin 108000l. in copper

* A proposal for the use of Irish manufactures, p. 1. of this vol.

for

for this kingdom; which patent, however, did not oblige any one here to take them, unless they pleased. Now you must know, that the halfpence and farthings in England pass for very little more than they are worth; and if you should beat them to pieces, and sell them to the brasier, you would not lose much above a penny in a shilling. But Mr. Wood made his halfpence of such base metal, and so much smaller than the English ones, that the brasier would hardly give you above a penny of good money for a shilling of his; so that this sum of 108000l. in good gold and silver, must be given for trash, that will not be worth above eight or nine thousand pounds real value. But this is not the worst; for, Mr. Wood, when he pleases, may by stealth send over another 108000l. and buy all our goods for eleven parts in twelve under the value. For example, if a hatter sells a dozen of hats for five shillings apiece, which amounts to three pounds, and receives the payment in Wood's coin, he really receives only the value of five shillings.

Perhaps, you will wonder how such an ordinary fellow, as this Mr. Wood, could have so much interest, as to get his MAJESTY's broad seal for so great a sum of bad money to be sent to this poor country; and that all the nobility and gentry here could not obtain the same favour, and let us make our own halfpence, as we used to do. Now I will make that matter very plain: we are at great distance from the king's court, and have nobody there to solicit for us, although a great number of lords and 'squires, whose estates are here, and are our countrymen, spend all their lives and fortunes there: but this same Mr. Wood was able to attend constantly

for his own interest; he is an Englishman, and had great friends; and it seems, knew very well where to give money to those that would speak to others, that could speak to the king, and would tell a fair story. And his majesty, and perhaps the great lord or lords who advise him, might think it was for our country's good; and ſo, as the lawyers express it, the king was deceived in his grant, which often happens in all reigns. And I am sure if his majesty knew that such a patent, if it should take effect according to the desire of Mr. Wood, would utterly ruin this kingdom, which has given such great proofs of its loyalty, he would immediately recall it, and perhaps show his displeasure to somebody or other: but a word to the wise is enough. Most of you must have heard with what anger our honourable house of commons received an account of this Wood's patent. There were several fine speeches made upon it, and plain proofs, that it was all a wicked cheat from the bottom to the top; and several smart votes were printed, which that ſame Wood had the assurance to answer likewise in print; and in so confident a way, as if he were a better man than our whole parliament put together.

This Wood, as soon as his patent was passed, or soon after, sends over a great many barrels of those halfpence to Cork, and other seaport towns; and to get them off, offered a hundred pounds in his coin, for seventy or eighty in silver: but the collectors of the king's customs very honestly refused to take them, and so did almost every body else. And since the parliament has condemned them, and desired the king that they might be stopped, all the kingdom do abominate them.

But

But Wood is ſtill working underhand to force his halfpence upon us; and if he can, by the help of his friends in England, prevail ſo far as to get an order, that the commiſſioners and collectors of the king's money ſhall receive them, and that the army is to be paid with them, then he thinks his work ſhall be done. And this is the difficulty you will be under in ſuch a caſe; for, the common ſoldier, when he goes to the market, or alehouse, will offer this money; and if it be refuſed, perhaps he will ſwagger and hector, and threaten to beat the butcher, or alewife, or take the goods by force, and throw them the bad halfpence. In this and the like caſes, the ſhopkeeper, or victualler, or any other tradeſman, has no more to do, than to demand ten times the price of his goods, if it is to be paid in Wood's money; for example, twenty pence of that money for a quart of ale, and ſo in all things elſe, and not part with his goods till he gets the money.

For, ſuppoſe you go to an alehouſe with that baſe money, and the landlord gives you a quart for four of thoſe halfpence, what muſt the victualler do? his brewer will not be paid in that coin; or, if the brewer ſhould be ſuch a fool, the farmers will not take it from them for their bere*, becauſe they are bound, by their leaſes, to pay their rents in good and lawful money of England; which this is not, nor of Ireland neither; and the 'squire, their landlord, will never be ſo bewitched to take ſuch traſh for his land; ſo that it muſt certainly ſtop ſomewhere or other, and wherever it ſtops, it is the ſame thing, and we are all undone.

* A ſort of barley in Ireland.

The common weight of these halfpence is between four and five to an ounce, suppose five; then three shillings and four pence will weigh a pound, and consequently twenty shillings will weigh six pounds butter weight. Now there are many hundred farmers, who pay two hundred pounds a year rent; therefore, when one of these farmers comes with his half year's rent, which is one hundred pounds, it will be at least six hundred pounds weight, which is three horses load.

If a 'squire has a mind to come to town to buy clothes, and wine, and spices for himself and family, or perhaps to pass the winter here, he must bring with him five or six horses well loaden with sacks, as the farmers bring their corn; and when his lady comes in her coach to our shops, it must be followed by a car loaded with Mr. Wood's money. And I hope we shall have the grace to take it for no more than it is worth.

They say 'squire Conolly * has sixteen thousand pounds a year; now, if he sends for his rent to town, as it is likely he does, he must have two hundred and fifty horses to bring up his halfyear's rent, and two or three great cellars in his house for stowage. But what the bankers will do, I cannot tell: for I am assured, that some great bankers keep by them forty thousand pounds in ready cash, to answer all payments; which sum, in Mr. Wood's money, would require twelve hundred horses to carry it.

For my own part, I am already resolved what to do: I have a pretty good shop of Irish stuffs

* Then speaker of the house of commons.

and

and silks, and instead of taking Mr. Wood's bad copper, I intend to truck with my neighbours the butchers and bakers and brewers, and the rest, goods for goods; and the little gold and silver I have, I will keep by me, like my heart's blood, till better times, or until I am just ready to starve; and then I will buy Mr. Wood's money, as my father did the brass money in king James's time, who could buy ten pounds of it with a guinea; and I hope to get as much for a pistole, and so purchase bread from those who will be such fools as to sell it me.

These halfpence, if they once pass, will soon be counterfeited, because it may be cheaply done, the stuff is so base. The Dutch likewise will probably do the same thing, and send them over to us to pay for our goods; and Mr. Wood will never be at rest, but coin on; so that in some years we shall have at least five times 108000l. of this lumber. Now the current money of this kingdom is not reckoned to be above four hundred thousand pounds in all; and while there is a silver sixpence left, these bloodsuckers will never be quiet.

When once the kingdom is reduced to such a condition, I will tell you what must be the end: the gentlemen of estates will all turn off their tenants for want of payments, because, as I told you before, the tenants are obliged by their leases to pay sterling, which is lawful current money of England: then they will turn their own farmers, as too many of them do already; run all into sheep, where they can, keeping only such other cattle as are necessary; then they will be their

own merchants, and send their wool, and butter, and hides, and linen beyond sea, for ready money, and wine, and spices, and silks. They will keep only a few miserable cottagers: the farmers must rob, or beg, or leave their country; the shopkeepers in this, and every other town, must break and starve; for it is the landed man that maintains the merchant, and shopkeeper, and handicraftsman.

But when the 'squire turns farmer and merchant himself, all the good money he gets from abroad, he will hoard up to send for England, and keep some poor tailor or weaver and the like in his own house, who will be glad to get bread at any rate.

I should never have done, if I were to tell you all the miseries that we shall undergo, if we be so foolish and wicked as to take this cursed coin. It would be very hard, if all Ireland should be put into one scale, and this sorry fellow Wood into the other; that Mr. Wood should weigh down this whole kingdom, by which England gets above a million of good money every year clear into their pockets: and that is more than the English do by all the world besides.

But your great comfort is, that as his majesty's patent does not oblige you to take this money, so the laws have not given the crown a power of forcing the subject to take what money the king pleases; for then, by the same reason, we might be bound to take pebblestones, or cockleshells, or stamped leather, for current coin, if ever we should happen to live under an ill prince; who might likewise, by the same power, make a guinea

pass

pass for ten pounds, a shilling for twenty shillings, and so on; by which he would, in a short time, get all the silver and gold of the kingdom into his own hands, and leave us nothing but brass or leather, or what he pleased. Neither is any thing reckoned more cruel and oppressive in the French government, than their common practice of calling in all their money, after they have sunk it very low, and then coining it anew at a much higher value; which, however, is not the thousandth part so wicked as this abominable project of Mr. Wood. For, the French give their subjects silver for silver, and gold for gold; but this fellow will not so much as give us good brass or copper for our gold and silver, nor even a twelfth part of their worth.

Having said this much, I will now go on to tell you the judgment of some great lawyers in this matter; whom I feed on purpose for your sakes, and got their opinions under their hands, that I might be sure I went upon good grounds.

A famous law-book, called the Mirror of Justice, discoursing of the charters (or laws) ordained by our ancient kings, declares the law to be as follows: it was ordained that no king of this realm should change or impair the money, or make any other money than of gold or silver, without the assent of all the counties; that is, as my lord Coke* says, without the assent of parliament.

This book is very ancient, and of great authority for the time in which it was written, and with that character is often quoted by that great lawyer

* 1 Inst. 576.

my lord Coke*. By the law of England the several metals are divided into lawful or true metal, and unlawful or false metal: the former comprehends silver and gold, the latter all baser metals: that the former is only to pass in payments, appears by an act of parliament† made the twentieth year of Edward the first, called the statute concerning the passing of pence; which I give you here as I got it translated into English; for some of our laws at that time were, as I am told, written in Latin: Whoever in buying or selling presumes to refuse a halfpenny or farthing of lawful money, bearing the stamp which it ought to have, let him be seized on as a contemner of the king's majesty, and cast into prison.

By this statute, no person is to be reckoned a contemner of the king's majesty, and for that crime to be committed to prison, but he who refuses to accept the king's coin made of lawful metal; by which, as I observed before, silver and gold only are intended.

That this is the true construction of the act, appears not only from the plain meaning of the words, but from my lord Coke's‡ observation upon it. By this act (says he) it appears, that no subject can be forced to take, in buying, or selling, or other payment, any money made but of lawful metal; that is, of silver or gold.

The law of England gives the king all mines of gold and silver; but not the mines of other metals: the reason of which prerogative or power, as it is given by my lord Coke§, is, because money can

* 2 Inst. 576,7. † 2 Inst. 577. ‡ 2 Inst. 577.
§ 2 Inst. 577.

be

be made of gold and silver, but not of other metals.

Pursuant to this opinion, halfpence and farthings were anciently made of silver, which is evident from the act of parliament of Henry the fourth, chap. 4, whereby it is enacted as follows: Item, for the great scarcity that is at present within the realm of England of halfpence and farthings of silver, it is ordained and established, that the third part of all the money of silver plate which shall be brought to the bullion, shall be made into halfpence and farthings. This shows that the words halfpence and farthings of lawful money in that statute concerning the passing of pence, is meant a small coin in halfpence and farthings of silver.

This is farther manifest from the statute of the ninth year of Edward the third, chap. 3, which enacts, that no sterling halfpenny or farthing be molten for to make vessels, or any other thing by the goldsmiths, or others, upon forfeiture of the money so molten (or melted).

By another act in this king's reign, black money was not to be current in England. And by an act in the eleventh year of his reign, chap. 5, galley halfpence were not to pass: what kind of coin these were, I do not know; but I presume they were made of base metal. And these acts were no new laws, but farther declarations of the old laws relating to the coin.

Thus the law stands in relation to coin. Nor is there any example to the contrary, except one in Davis's reports, who tells us, that in the time of Tyrone's rebellion, queen Elizabeth ordered money of

of mixed metal to be coined in the Tower of London, and sent over hither for the payment of the army, obliging all people to receive it; and commanding that all silver money should be taken only as bullion; that is, for as much as it weighed. Davis tells us several particulars in this matter, too long here to trouble you with, and that the privy council of this kingdom, obliged a merchant in England, to receive this mixed money for goods transmitted hither.

But this proceeding is rejected by all the best lawyers, as contrary to law, the privy council here having no such legal power. And besides, it is to be considered, that the QUEEN was then under great difficulties by a rebellion in this kingdom, assisted from Spain; and whatever is done in great exigences and dangerous times, should never be an example to proceed by in seasons of peace and quietness.

I will now, my dear friends, to save you the trouble, set before you in short, what the law obliges you to do, and what it does not oblige you to.

First, you are obliged to take all money in payments which is coined by the king, and is of the English standard or weight, provided it be of gold or silver.

Secondly, you are not obliged to take any money which is not of gold or silver; not only the halfpence or farthings of England, but of any other country. And it is merely for convenience, or ease, that you are content to take them; because the custom of coining silver halfpence and farthings has long

long been left off; I suppose on account of their being subject to be lost.

Thirdly, much less are we obliged to take those vile halfpence of that same Wood, by which you must lose almost eleven pence in every shilling.

Therefore, my friends, stand to it one and all: refuse this filthy trash. It is no treason to rebel against Mr. Wood. His majesty, in his patent, obliges nobody to take these halfpence: our gracious prince has no such ill advisers about him; or, if he had, yet you see, the laws have not left it in the king's power to force us to take any coin but what is lawful, of right standard, gold and silver. Therefore you have nothing to fear.

And let me in the next place apply myself particularly to you, who are the poorer sort of tradesmen. Perhaps you may think, you will not be so great losers as the rich, if these halfpence should pass; because you seldom see any silver, and your customers come to your shops or stalls with nothing but brass, which you likewise find hard to be got. But you may take my word, whenever this money gains footing among you, you will be utterly undone. If you carry these halfpence to a shop for tobacco or brandy, or any other thing that you want; the shopkeeper will advance his goods accordingly, or else he must break, and leave the key under the door. Do you think I will sell you a yard of tenpenny stuff for twenty of Mr. Wood's halfpence? No, not under two hundred at least; neither will I be at the trouble of counting, but weigh them in a lump. I will tell you one thing farther, that if Mr. Wood's project should take, it would ruin even our beggars; for when I give a beggar

beggar a halfpenny, it will quench his thirst, or go a good way to fill his belly; but the twelfth part of a halfpenny will do him no more service than if I should give him three pins out of my sleeve.

In short, these halfpence are like the accursed thing, which, as the Scripture tells us, the children of Israel were forbidden to touch. They will run about like the plague, and destroy every one who lays his hands upon them. I have heard scholars talk of a man who told the king, that he had invented a way to torment people by putting them into a bull of brass with fire under it: but the prince put the projector first into his brazen bull, to make the experiment. This very much resembles the project of Mr. Wood; and the like of this may possibly be Mr. Wood's fate; that the brass he contrived to torment this kingdom with, may prove his own torment, and his destruction at last.

N. B. The author of this paper is informed by persons, who have made it their business to be exact in their observations on the true value of these halfpence, that any person may expect to get a quart of twopenny ale for thirty-six of them.

I desire that all families may keep this paper carefully by them, to refresh their memories whenever they shall have farther notice of Mr. Wood's halfpence, or any other the like imposture.

LETTER

LETTER II.

A LETTER TO

MR. HARDING THE PRINTER,

UPON OCCASION OF

A PARAGRAPH IN HIS NEWSPAPER OF AUGUST THE FIRST, 1724,

RELATING TO

MR. WOOD'S HALFPENCE.

IN your newsletter of the first instant, there is a paragraph, dated from London July 25th, relating to Wood's halfpence; whereby it is plain, what I foretold in my letter to the shopkeepers, etc. that this vile fellow would never be at rest; and that the danger of our ruin approaches nearer; and therefore the kingdom requires new and fresh warning. However, I take this paragraph to be, in a great measure, an imposition upon the publick; at least I hope so, because I am informed that Wood is generally his own newswriter. I cannot but observe from that paragraph, that this publick enemy of ours, not satisfied to ruin us with his trash, takes every occasion to treat this kingdom with the utmost contempt. He represents several of our merchants and traders, upon examination before a committee of council, agreeing, that there

was

But your newsletter says, that an essay was made of the coin. How impudent and insupportable is this! Wood takes care to coin a dozen or two halfpence of good metal, sends them to the Tower, and they are approved; and these must answer all that he has already coined, or shall coin for the future. It is true, indeed, that a gentleman often sends to my shop for a pattern of stuff; I cut it fairly off, and if he likes it, he comes, or sends, and compares the pattern with the whole piece, and probably we come to a bargain. But if I were to buy a hundred sheep, and the grazier should bring me one single wether fat and well fleeced, by way of pattern, and expect the same price round for the whole hundred, without suffering me to see them before he was paid, or giving me good security to restore my money for those that were lean, or shorn, or scabby, I would be none of his customer. I have heard of a man who had a mind to sell his house, and therefore carried a piece of brick in his pocket, which he showed as a pattern to encourage purchasers; and this is directly the case in point with Mr. Wood's essay.

The next part of the paragraph, contains Mr. Wood's voluntary proposals for preventing any farther objections or apprehensions.

His first proposal is, that whereas he has already coined seventeen thousand pounds, and has copper prepared to make it up forty thousand pounds, he will be content to coin no more, unless the EXIGENCIES OF TRADE REQUIRE IT, although his patent impowers him to coin a far greater quantity.

To which if I were to answer, it should be thus: let Mr. Wood and his crew of founders and tinkers coin

coin on, till there is not an old kettle left in the kingdom; let them coin old leather, tobacco-pipe clay, or the dirt in the street, and call their trumpery by what name they please, from a guinea to a farthing; we are not under any concern to know how he and his tribe of accomplices think fit to employ themselves. But I hope, and trust, that we are all, to a man, fully determined to have nothing to do with him or his ware.

The king has given him a patent to coin halfpence, but has not obliged us to take them; and I have already shown in my Letter to the Shopkeepers etc., that the law has not left it in the power of the prerogative to compel the subject to take any money, beside gold and silver of the right sterling and standard.

Wood farther purposes (if I understand him right, for his expressions are dubious) that he will not coin above forty thousand pounds, unless the exigencies of trade require it. First, I observe that this sum of forty thousand pounds is almost double to what I proved to be sufficient for the whole kingdom, although we had not one of our old halfpence left. Again, I ask, who is to be judge, when the exigencies of trade require it? Without doubt he means himself; for as to us of this poor kingdom, who must be utterly ruined if this project should succeed, we were never once consulted till the matter was over, and he will judge of our exigencies by his own: neither will these be ever at an end, till he and his accomplices shall think they have enough: and it now appears that he will not be content with all our gold and

silver, but intends to buy up our goods and manufactures with the same coin.

I shall not enter into examination of the prices for which he now proposes to sell his halfpence, or what he calls his copper by the pound; I have said enough of it in my former letter, and it has likewise been considered by others. It is certain that by his own first computation, we were to pay three shillings for what was intrinsically worth but one, although it had been of the true weight and standard for which he pretended to have contracted; but there is so great a difference both in weight and badness in several of his coins, that some of them have been nine in ten below the intrinsick value, and most of them six or seven.

His last proposal being of a peculiar strain and nature, deserves to be very particularly considered, both on account of the matter and the style. It is as follows:

Lastly, In consideration of the direful apprehensions which prevail in Ireland, that Mr. Wood will, by such coinage, drain them of their gold and silver; he proposes to take their manufactures in exchange, and that no person be obliged to receive more than five pence halfpenny at one payment.

First observe this little impudent hardwareman turning into ridicule the direful apprehensions of a whole kingdom, priding himself as the cause of them, and daring to prescribe (what no king of England ever attempted) how far a whole nation shall be obliged to take his brass coin. And he has reason to insult: for sure there was never an example in history of a great kingdom kept in awe for above a year, in daily dread of utter destruction, not by a powerful invader

vader at the head of twenty thousand men, not by a plague or a famine, not by a tyrannical prince (for we never had one more gracious) or a corrupt administration, but by one single, diminutive, insignificant mechanick.

But to go on: to remove our direful apprehensions that he will drain us of our gold and silver by his coinage, this little arbitrary mock-monarch most graciously offers to take our manufactures in exchange. Are our Irish understandings indeed so low in his opinion? Is not this the very misery we complain of; that his cursed project will put us under the necessity of selling our goods for what is equal to nothing? How would such a proposal sound from France or Spain, or any other country with which we traffick, if they should offer to deal with us only upon this condition, that we should take their money at ten times higher than the intrinsick value? Does Mr. Wood think, for instance, that we will sell him a stone of wool for a parcel of his counters not worth sixpence, when we can send it to England, and receive as many shillings in gold and silver? Surely there was never heard such a compound of impudence, villany, and folly.

His proposals conclude with perfect high treason. He promises, that no person shall be obliged to receive more than five pence halfpenny of his coin in one payment. By which it is plain, that he pretends to oblige every subject in this kingdom to take so much in every payment, if it be offered; whereas his patent obliges no man, nor can the prerogative, by law, claim such a power, as I have often observed; so that here Mr Wood takes upon him

the entire legislature, and an absolute dominion over the properties of the whole nation.

Good God! who are this wretch's advisers? who are his supporters, abettors, encouragers, or sharers? Mr. Wood will oblige me to take five pence halfpenny of his brass in every payment. And I will shoot Mr. Wood and his deputies through the head, like highwaymen or house-breakers, if they dare to force one farthing of their coin on me in the payment of a hundred pounds. It is no loss of honour to submit to the lion, but who, with the figure of a man, can think with patience of being devoured alive by a rat? He has laid a tax upon the people of Ireland of seventeen shillings at least in the pound: a tax, I say, not only upon lands, but interest-money, goods, manufactures, the hire of handicraftsmen, labourers, and servants. Shopkeepers, look to yourselves! Wood will oblige and force you to take five pence halfpenny of his trash in every payment: and many of you receive twenty, thirty, forty payments in one day, or else you can hardly find bread: and pray consider how much that will amount to in a year; twenty times five pence halfpenny is nine shillings and two pence, which is above a hundred and sixty pounds a year, wherein you will be losers of at least one hundred and forty pounds by taking your payments in his money. If any of you be content to deal with Mr. Wood on such conditions, you may; but for my own particular, let his money perish with him. If the famous Mr. Hampden rather chose to go to prison, than pay a few shillings to king Charles I, without authority of parliament; I will rather choose to be hanged, than

than have all my substance taxed at seventeen shillings in the pound, at the arbitrary will and pleasure of the venerable Mr. Wood.

The paragraph concludes thus: N. B. (that is to say, nota bene, or mark well) No evidence appeared from Ireland, or elsewhere, to prove the mischiefs complained of, or any abuses whatsoever committed in the execution of the said grant.

The impudence of this remark exceeds all that went before. First, the house of commons in Ireland, which represents the whole people of the kingdom; and secondly, the privy council addressed his majesty against these halfpence: what could be done more to express the universal sense of the nation? If his copper were diamonds, and the kingdom were entirely against it, would not that be sufficient to reject it? Must a committee of the whole house of commons, and our whole privy-council, go over to argue pro and con with Mr. Wood? To what end did the king give his patent for coining halfpence in Ireland? Was it not because it was represented to his sacred majesty, that such a coinage would be of advantage to the good of this kingdom, and of all his subjects here? It is to the patentee's peril, if this representation be false, and the execution of his patent be fraudulent and corrupt. Is he so wicked and foolish to think, that his patent was given him to ruin a million and a half of people, that he might be a gainer of three or fourscore thousand pounds to himself? Before he was at the charge of passing a patent, much more of raking up so much filthy dross, and stamping it with his majesty's image and superscription, should he not first in common sense, in common

equity, and common manners, have consulted the principal party concerned; that is to say, the people of the kingdom, the house of lords, or commons, or the privy-council? If any foreigner should ask us, whose image and superscription there is on Wood's coin? We should be ashamed to tell him, it was Cæsar's. In that great want of copper halfpence which he alleges we were, our city set up our Cæsar's * statue in excellent copper at an expense that is equal in value to thirty thousand pound of his coin; and we will not receive his image in worse metal.

I observe many of our people putting a melancholy case on this subject. It is true, say they, we are all undone if Wood's halfpence must pass; but what shall we do, if his majesty puts out a proclamation commanding us to take them? This has often been dinned in my ears. But I desire my countrymen to be assured that there is nothing in it. The king never issues out a proclamation but to enjoin what the law permits him. He will not issue out a proclamation against law; or, if such a thing should happen by a mistake, we are no more obliged to obey it, than to run our heads into the fire. Besides, his majesty will never command us by a proclamation, what he does not offer to command us in the patent itself. There he leaves it to our discretion; so that our destruction must be entirely owing to ourselves. Therefore let no man be afraid of a proclamation, which will never be granted; and if it should, yet upon this occasion will be of no force. The king's revenues here are

* An equestrian statue of George I, at Essex-bridge, Dublin.

near

near four hundred thousand pounds a year. Can you think his ministers will advise him to take them in Wood's brass, which will reduce the value to fifty thousand pounds? England gets a million sterling by this nation; which, if this project goes on, will be almost reduced to nothing: and do you think those who live in England upon Irish estates, will be content to take an eighth or tenth part by being paid in Wood's dross?

If Wood and his confederates were not convinced of our stupidity, they never would have attempted so audacious an enterprise. He now sees a spirit has been raised against him, and he only watches till it begin to flag: he goes about watching when to devour us. He hopes we shall be weary of contending with him; and at last, out of ignorance or fear, or of being perfectly tired with opposition, we shall be forced to yield: and therefore, I confess, it is my chief endeavour to keep up your spirits and resentments. If I tell you there is a precipice under you, and that if you go forward you will certainly break your necks; if I point to it before your eyes, must I be at the trouble of repeating it every morning? Are our people's hearts waxed gross? are their ears dull of hearing? and have they closed their eyes? I fear there are some few vipers among us, who for ten or twenty pounds gain would sell their souls and their country; although at last it should end in their own ruin, as well as ours. Be not like the deaf adder, who refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.

Although my letter be directed to you, Mr. Harding, yet I intend it for all my countrymen.

I have no interest in this affair, but what is common to the publick: I can live better than many others; I have some gold and silver by me, and a shop well furnished; and shall be able to make a shift when many of my betters are starving. But I am grieved to see the coldness and indifference of many people, with whom I discourse. Some are afraid of a proclamation; others shrug up their shoulders, and cry, What would you have us to do? Some give out, there is no danger at all: others are comforted, that it will be a common calamity, and they shall fare no worse than their neighbours. Will a man who hears midnight robbers at his door, get out of bed, and raise his family for a common defence; and shall a whole kingdom lie in a lethargy, while Mr. Wood comes, at the head of his confederates, to rob them of all they have, to ruin us and our posterity, for ever? If a highwayman meets you on the road, you give him your money to save your life; but God be thanked, Mr. Wood cannot touch a hair of your heads. You have all the laws of God and man on your side: when he or his accomplices offer you his dross, it is but saying no, and you are safe. If a madman should come into my shop with a handful of dirt raked out of the kennel, and offer it in payment for ten yards of stuff, I would pity, or laugh at him; or if his behaviour deserved it, kick him out of my doors. And if Mr. Wood comes to demand my gold and silver, or commodities for which I have paid my gold and silver, in exchange for his trash, can he deserve or expect better treatment?

When

When the evil day is come (if it must come) let us mark and observe those who presume to offer these halfpence in payment. Let their names and trades, and places of abode, be made publick, that every one may be aware of them, as betrayers of their country, and confederates with Mr. Wood. Let them be watched at markets and fairs; and let the first honest discoverer give the word about that Mr. Wood's halfpence have been offered, and caution the poor innocent people not to receive them.

Perhaps I have been too tedious; but there would never be an end, if I attempted to say all that this melancholy subject will bear. I will conclude with humbly offering one proposal; which, if it were put into practice, would blow up this destructive project at once. Let some skilful, judicious pen, draw up an advertisement to the following purpose:

Whereas one William Wood, hardwareman, now or lately sojourning in the city of London, has, by many misrepresentations, procured a patent for coining a hundred and eight thousand pounds in copper halfpence for this kingdom; which is a sum five times greater than our occasions require: And whereas it is notorious, that the said Wood has coined his halfpence of such base metal, and false weight, that they are at least six parts in seven below the real value; And whereas we have reason to apprehend, that the said Wood may at any time hereafter clandestinely coin as many more halfpence as he pleases: And whereas the said patent neither does, nor can oblige his majesty's subjects to receive the said halfpence in any payment, but leaves it

it to their voluntary choice; because by law the subject cannot be obliged to take any money, except gold or silver: And whereas, contrary to the letter and meaning of the said patent, the said Wood has declared, that every person shall be obliged to take five pence halfpenny of his coin in every payment: And whereas the house of commons, and privy-council, have severally addressed his most sacred majesty, representing the ill consequences which the said coinage may have upon this kingdom: And lastly, whereas it is universally agreed, that the whole nation to a man, (except Mr. Wood, and his confederates) are in the utmost apprehensions of the ruinous consequences that must follow from the said coinage; Therefore we, whose names are underwritten, being persons of considerable estates in this kingdom, and residers therein, do unanimously resolve and declare, that we will never receive one farthing or halfpenny of the said Wood's coining; and that we will direct all our tenants to refuse the said coin from any person whatsoever; of which that they may not be ignorant, we have sent them a copy of this advertisement, to be read to them by our stewards, receivers, etc.

I could wish, that a paper of this nature might be drawn up, and signed by two or three hundred principal gentlemen of this kingdom; and printed copies thereof sent to their several tenants. I am deceived if any thing could sooner defeat this execrable design of Wood, and his accomplices. This would immediately give the alarm, and set the kingdom on their guard; this would give courage to the meanest tenant and cottager. How long, O Lord, righteous and true, etc.

I must

I must tell you in particular, Mr. Harding, that you are much to blame. Several hundred persons have inquired at your house for my Letter to the Shopkeepers, etc. and you had none to sell them. Pray keep yourself provided with that Letter, and with this: you have got very well by the former; but I did not then write for your sake, any more than I do now. Pray advertise both in every newspaper: and let it not be your fault or mine, if our countrymen will not take warning. I desire you likewise to sell them as cheap as you can.

I am your servant,

M. B.

August 4, 1724.

LETTER

LETTER III.

SOME

OBSERVATIONS

UPON A PAPER, CALLED,

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

OF

THE MOST HONOURABLE THE PRIVY-COUNCIL IN ENGLAND,

RELATING TO WOOD'S HALFPENCE.

TO

THE NOBILITY AND GENTRY OF THE KINGDOM OF IRELAND.

HAVING already written two letters to the people of my own level and condition, and having now very pressing occasion for writing a third: I thought I could not more properly address it than to your lordships and worships.

The occasion is this: a printed paper was sent to me on the 18th instant, entitled, A Report of the Committee of the Lords of his Majesty's most honourable Privy-Council in England, relating to Mr. Wood's halfpence and farthings. There is no

no mention made where the paper was printed; but I suppose it to have been in Dublin: and I have been told, that the copy did not come over in the Gazette, but in the London Journal, or some other print of no authority or consequence. And for any thing that legally appears to the contrary, it may be a contrivance to fright us; or a project of some printer, who has a mind to make a penny by publishing something upon a subject which now employs all our thoughts in this kingdom. Mr. Wood, in publishing this paper, would insinuate to the world, as if the committee had a greater concern for his credit, and private emolument, than for the honour of the privy-council, and both houses of parliament here, and for the quiet and welfare of this whole kingdom; for it seems intended as a vindication of Mr. Wood, not without several severe reflections on the houses of lords and commons of Ireland.

The whole is indeed written with the turn and air of a pamphlet; as if it were a dispute between William Wood on the one part, and the lords justices, privy-council, and both houses of parliament on the other: the design of it being to clear William Wood, and to charge the other side with casting rash and groundless aspersions upon him.

But if it be really what the title imports, Mr. Wood has treated the committee with great rudeness, by publishing an act of theirs in so unbecoming a manner, without their leave, and before it was communicated to the government and privy-council of Ireland; to whom the committee advised that it should be transmitted. But, with all deference be it spoken, I do not conceive that a report of

of a committee of the council in England is hitherto a law in either kingdom; and until any point is determined to be a law, it remains disputable by every subject.

This (may it please your lordships and worships) may seem a strange way of discoursing in an illiterate shopkeeper. I have endeavoured (although without the help of books) to improve that small portion of reason God has been pleased to give me; and when reason plainly appears before me, I cannot turn away my head from it. Thus for instance, if any lawyer should tell me that such a point were law, from which many gross palpable absurdities must follow; I would not, I could not believe him. If Sir Edward Coke should positively assert (which he no where does, but the direct contrary) that a limited prince, could, by his prerogative, oblige his subjects to take half an ounce of lead, stamped with his image, for twenty shillings in gold, I should swear he was deceived, or a deceiver; because a power like that, would leave the whole lives and fortunes of the people entirely at the mercy of the monarch; yet this in effect is what Wood has advanced in some of his papers; and what suspicious people may possibly apprehend from some passages in that which is called the report.

That paper mentions such persons to have been examined, who were desirous and willing to be heard upon this subject. I am told they were four in all; Coleby, Brown, Mr. Finley the banker, and one more, whose name I know not. The first of these was tried for robbing the treasury in Ireland; and though he was acquitted for want of legal proof,

proof, yet every person in the court believed him to be guilty. The second was tried for a rape, and stands recorded in the votes of the house of commons, for endeavouring, by perjury and subornation, to take away the life of John Bingham, esq.

But, since I have gone so far as to mention particular persons, it may be some satisfaction to know who is this Wood himself, that has the honour to have a whole kingdom at his mercy for almost two years together. I find he is in the patent entitled esquire, although he were understood to be only a hardwareman; and so I have been bold to call him in my former letters; however, a 'squire he is, not only by virtue of his patent, but by having been a collector in Shropshire; where, pretending to have been robbed, and suing the county, he was cast, and for the infamy of the fact lost his employment.

I have heard another story of this 'squire Wood, from a very honourable lady, that one Hamilton told her. Hamilton was sent for six years ago, by sir Isaac Newton, to try the coinage of four men, who then solicited a patent for coining halfpence for Ireland; their names were Wood, Costor, Eliston, and Parker. Parker made the fairest offer, and Wood the worst; for his coin were three halfpence in a pound weight less value than the other. By which it is plain, with what intentions he solicited his patent; but not so plain how he obtained it.

It is alleged in the said paper called the Report, that upon repeated orders from a secretary of state for sending over such papers and witnesses, as should be thought proper to support the objections made

made against the patent by both houses of parliament; the lord lieutenant represented the great difficulty he found himself in, to comply with these orders: that none of the principal members of both houses who were in the king's service, or council, would take upon them to advise, how any material person, or papers, might be sent over on this occasion, etc. And this is often repeated, and represented as a proceeding that seems very extraordinary, and that in a matter which had raised so great a clamour in Ireland, no one person could be prevailed upon to come over from Ireland in support of the united sense of both houses of parliament in Ireland; especially that the chief difficulty should arise from a general apprehension of a miscarriage, in an inquiry before his majesty, or in a proceeding by due course of law, in a case where both houses of parliament had declared themselves so fully convinced, and satisfied upon evidence, and examinations taken in the most solemn manner.

How shall I, a poor ignorant shopkeeper, utterly unskilled in law, be able to answer so weighty an objection? I will try what can be done by plain reason, unassisted by art, cunning, or eloquence.

In my humble opinion, the committee of council has already prejudged the whole case, by calling the united sense of both houses of parliament in Ireland a universal clamour. Here the addresses of the lords and commons of Ireland, against a ruinous, destructive project of an obscure, single undertaker, is called a clamour. I desire to know, how such a style would be resented in England from a committee of council there to a parliament; and how many impeachments would follow

follow upon it? But, supposing the appellation to be proper, I never heard of a wise minister who despised the universal clamour of a people; and if that clamour can be quieted by disappointing the fraudulent practice of a single person, the purchase is not exorbitant.

But in answer to this objection: first it is manifest, that if this coinage had been in Ireland, with such limitations as have been formerly specified in other patents, and granted to persons of this kingdom, or even of England, able to give sufficient security, few or no inconveniencies could have happened. As to Mr. Knox's patent mentioned in the report, security was given into the exchequer, that the patentee should, upon all demands, be obliged to receive his halfpence back, and pay gold or silver in exchange for them. And Mr. Moor (to whom I suppose that patent was made over) was in 1694 forced to leave off coining before the end of that year, by the great crowds of people continually offering to return his coinage upon him. In 1698 he coined again, and was forced to give over for the same reason. This entirely alters the case; for there is no such condition in Wood's patent; which condition was worth a hundred times all other limitations whatsoever.

Put the case, that the two houses of lords and commons of England, and the privy council there, should address his majesty to recall a patent, from whence they apprehended the most ruinous consequences to the whole kingdom; and, to make it stronger if possible, that the whole nation, almost to a man, should thereupon discover the

most dismal apprehensions, as Mr. Wood styles them; would his majesty debate half an hour what he had to do? Would any minister dare advise him against recalling such a patent? Or would the matter be referred to the privy council, or to Westminster-hall; the two houses of parliament plaintiffs, and William Wood defendant? And is there even the smallest difference between the two cases?

Were not the people of Ireland born as free as those of England? How have they forfeited their freedom? Is not their parliament as fair a representative of the people as that of England? And has not their privy council as great, or a greater share in the administration of publick affairs? Are not they subjects of the same king? Does not the same sun shine upon them? And have they not the same God for their protector? Am I a freeman in England, and do I become a slave in six hours by crossing the channel? No wonder then, if the boldest persons were cautious to interpose, in a matter already determined by the whole voice of the nation, or to presume to represent the representatives of the kingdom; and were justly apprehensive of meeting such a treatment as they would deserve at the next session. It would seem very extraordinary, if any inferiour court in England, should take a great matter out of the hands of the high court of parliament, during a prorogation, and decide it against the opinion of both houses.

It happens however, that although no persons were so bold as to go over as evidences, to prove the truth of the objections, made against this patent

tent by the high court of parliament here, yet these objections stand good, notwithstanding the answers made by Mr. Wood and his counsel.

The report says, that upon an essay made of the fineness, weight, and value of this copper, it exceeded in every article. This is possible enough in the pieces upon which the essay was made; but Wood must have failed very much in point of dexterity, if he had not taken care to provide a sufficient quantity of such halfpence, as would bear the trial; which he was able to do, although they were taken out of several parcels; since it is now plain, that the bias of favour has been wholly on his side.

But what need is there of disputing, when we have a positive demonstration of Wood's fraudulent practices in this point? I have seen a large quantity of these halfpence weighed by a very skilful person, which were of four different kinds, three of them considerably under weight. I have now before me an exact computation of the difference of weight between these four sorts; by which it appears, that the fourth sort, or the lightest, differs from the first to a degree, that in the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, the patentee will be a gainer, only by that difference, of twenty-four thousand four hundred and ninety-four pounds; and in the whole, the publick will be a loser of eighty-two thousand one hundred and sixty-eight pounds sixteen shillings, even supposing the metal in point of goodness to answer Wood's contract, and the essay that has been made, which it infallibly does not. For, this point has likewise been inquired into by very experienced

men; who, upon several trials on many of these halfpence, have found them to be at least one fourth part below the real value, not including the raps or counterfeits that he, or his accomplices, have already made of his own coin, and scattered about. Now the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, coined by the weight of the fourth or lightest sort of his halfpence, will amount to one hundred twenty-two thousand four hundred eighty-eight pounds, sixteen shillings; and if we subtract a fourth part of the real value, by the base mixture in the metal, we must add to the publick loss one fourth part to be subtracted from the intrinsick value of the copper; which in three hundred and sixty tons amounts to ten thousand and eighty pounds; and this, added to the former sum of eighty-two thousand one hundred sixty-eight pounds, sixteen shillings, will make in all ninety-two thousand two hundred forty-eight pounds loss to the publick: beside the raps or counterfeits that he may at any time hereafter think fit to coin. Nor do I know whether he reckons the dross exclusive, or inclusive, with his three hundred and sixty tons of copper; which, however, will make a considerable difference in the account.

You will here please to observe, that the profit allowed to Wood by the patent, is twelve pence out of every pound of copper valued at 1s. 6d. whereas 5d. only is allowed for coinage of a pound weight for the English halfpence; and this difference is almost 25 per cent, which is double to the highest exchange of money, even under all the additional pressures and obstructions to trade, that this

this unhappy kingdom lies at present. This one circumstance, in the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, makes a difference of twenty-seven thousand seven hundred and twenty pounds, between English and Irish halfpence, even allowing those of Wood to be all of the heaviest sort.

It is likewise to be considered, that for every halfpenny in a pound weight, exceeding the number directed by the patent, Wood will be a gainer in the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, sixteen hundred and eighty pounds profit more than the patent allows him; out of which he may afford to make his comptrollers easy upon that article.

As to what is alleged, that these halfpence far exceed the like coinage for Ireland in the reigns of his majesty's predecessors; there cannot well be a more exceptionable way of arguing, although the fact were true; which, however, is altogether mistaken; not by any fault in the committee, but by the fraud and imposition of Wood, who certainly produced the worst patterns he could find; such as were coined in small numbers by permissions to private men, as butchers halfpence, black-dogs, and others the like; or perhaps the small St. Patrick's coin, which passes now for a farthing, or at best some of the smallest raps of the latest kind. For I have now by me halfpence coined in the year 1680 by virtue of the patent granted to my lord Dartmouth, which was renewed to Knox, and they are heavier by a ninth part than those of Wood, and of much better metal; and the great St. Patrick's halfpence are yet larger than either.

But what is all this to the present debate? If, under the various exigencies of former times by wars, rebellions, and insurrections, the kings of England were sometimes forced to pay their armies here with mixed or base money; God forbid that the necessities of turbulent times should be a precedent for times of peace, and order, and settlement.

In the patent abovementioned, granted to lord Dartmouth in the reign of king Charles the second, and renewed to Knox, the securities given into the exchequer, obliging the patentee to receive his money back upon every demand, were an effectual remedy against all inconveniencies: and the copper was coined in our kingdom; so that we were in no danger to purchase it with the loss of all our silver and gold carried over to another, nor to be at the trouble of going to England, for the redressing of any abuse.

That the kings of England have exercised their prerogative of coining copper for Ireland, and for England, is not the present question: but, to speak in the style of the report, it would seem a little extraordinary, supposing a king should think fit to exercise his prerogative by coining copper in Ireland, to be current in England, without referring it to his officers in that kingdom, to be informed whether the grant were reasonable, and whether the people desired it or not, and without regard to the addresses of his parliament against it. God forbid that so mean a man as I should meddle with the king's prerogative: but I have heard very wise men say, that the king's prerogative is bounded and limited by the good and welfare

welfare of his people. I desire to know, whether it be not understood and avowed, that the good of Ireland was intended by this patent? But Ireland is not consulted at all in the matter; and, as soon as Ireland is informed of it, they declare against it: the two houses of parliament and the privy council address his majesty upon the mischiefs apprehended by such a patent; the privy council in England take the matter out of the parliament's cognizance; the good of the kingdom is dropped; and it is now determined, that Mr. Wood shall have the power of ruining a whole nation for his private advantage.

I never can suppose, that such patents as these, were originally granted with a view of being a job for the interest of a particular person, to the damage of the publick. Whatever profit must arise to the patentee, was surely meant at best but as a secondary motive; and since somebody must be a gainer, the choice of the person was made either by favour, or something else, or by the pretence of merit and honesty: this argument returns so often and strongly into my head, that I cannot forbear frequently repeating it. Surely his majesty, when he consented to the passing of this patent, conceived he was doing an act of grace to his most loyal subjects of Ireland, without any regard to Mr. Wood, farther than as an instrument: but the people of Ireland think this patent (intended, no doubt, for their good) to be a most intolerable grievance; and therefore Mr. Wood can never succeed, without an open avowal that his profit is preferred, not only before the interest, but the very safety and being of a great kingdom; and a king-

dom distinguished for its loyalty perhaps above all others upon earth; not turned from its duty by the jurisdiction of the house of lords abolished at a stroke, by the hardships of the act of navigation newly enforced, by all possible obstructions in trade, and by a hundred other instances, enough to fill this paper; nor was there ever among us the least attempt toward an insurrection in favour of the pretender. Therefore, whatever justice a free people can claim, we have at least an equal title to it with our brethren in England; and whatever grace a good prince can bestow on the most loyal subjects, we have reason to expect it; neither has this kingdom any way deserved to be sacrificed to one single, rapacious, obscure, ignominious projector.

Among other clauses mentioned in this patent, to show how advantageous it is to Ireland, there is one which seems to be of a singular nature: that the patentee shall be obliged during his term to pay eight hundred pounds a year to the crown, and two hundred pounds a year to the comptroller. I have heard indeed, that the king's council do always consider in the passing of a patent, whether it will be of advantage to the crown; but I have likewise heard, that it is at the same time considered, whether passing of it may be injurious to any other persons, or bodies politick? However, although the attorney and solicitor be servants to the king, and therefore bound to consult his majesty's interest; yet I am under some doubt, whether eight hundred pounds a year to the crown, would be equivalent to the ruin of a kingdom. It would be far better for us to have paid eight thousand pounds a year

a year into his majesty's coffers in the midst of all our taxes, (which in proportion are greater in this kingdom than ever they were in England, even during the war) than purchase such an addition to the revenue at the price of our utter undoing.

But here it is plain, that fourteen thousand pounds are to be paid by Wood, only as a small circumstantial charge for the purchase of his patent: what were his other visible costs I know not, and what were his latent, is variously conjectured; but he must be surely a man of some wonderful merit. Has he saved any other kingdom at his own expense, to give him a title of reimbursing himself by the destruction of ours? Has he discovered the longitude, or the universal medicine? No; but he has found the philosopher's stone after a new manner, by debasing copper, and resolving to force it upon us for gold.

When the two houses represented to his majesty, that this patent to Wood was obtained in a clandestine manner, surely the committee could not think the parliament would insinuate, that it had not passed in the common forms, and run through every office where fees and perquisites were due. They knew very well, that persons in places were no enemies to grants; and that the officers of the crown could not be kept in the dark. But the late lord lieutenant * of Ireland affirmed it was a secret to him; and who will doubt his veracity, especially when he swore to a person of quality, from whom I had it, that Ireland should never be troubled with these halfpence? It was a secret to the people of

* Duke of Grafton.

Ireland,

Ireland, who were to be the only sufferers; and those who best know the state of the kingdom, and were most able to advise in such an affair, were wholly strangers to it.

It is allowed by the report, that this patent was passed without the knowledge of the chief governor, or officers of Ireland: and it is there elaborately shown, that former patents have passed in the same manner, and are good in law. I shall not dispute legality of patents, but am ready to suppose it in his majesty's power, to grant a patent for stamping round bits of copper, to every subject he has. Therefore, to lay aside the point of law, I would only put the question, whether in reason and justice it would not have been proper, in an affair upon which the welfare of this kingdom depends, that the said kingdom should have received timely notice; and the matter not be carried on between the patentee, and the officers of the crown, who were to be the only gainers by it.

The parliament, who in matters of this nature are the most able and faithful counsellors, did represent this grant to be destructive of trade, and dangerous to the properties of the people: to which the only answer is, that the king has a prerogative to make such a grant.

It is asserted, that in the patent to Knox, his halfpence are made and declared the current coin of the kingdom; whereas, in this to Wood, there is only a power given to issue them to such as will receive them. The authors of the report, I think, do not affirm, that the king can, by law, declare any thing to be current money by his letters patent. I dare say they will not affirm it; and if Knox's

patent

patent contained in it powers contrary to law, why is it mentioned as a precedent in his majesty's just and merciful reign? But, although that clause be not in Wood's patent, yet possibly there are others, the legality whereof may be equally doubted; and particularly that, whereby a power is given to William Wood, to break into houses in search of any coin made in imitation of his. This may perhaps be affirmed to be illegal and dangerous to the liberty of the subject; yet this is a precedent taken from Knox's patent, where the same power is granted, and is a strong instance what uses may be sometimes made of precedents.

But although, before the passing of this patent, it was not thought necessary to consult any persons of this kingdom, or make the least inquiry, whether copper money were wanting among us; yet now at length when the matter is over, when the patent has long passed, when Wood has already coined seventeen thousand pounds, and has his tools and implements prepared to coin six times as much more, the committee has been pleased to make this affair the subject of inquiry; Wood is permitted to produce his evidences, which consist, as I have already observed, of four in number, whereof Coleby, Brown, and Mr. Finley the banker are three. And these were to prove that copper money was extremely wanted in Ireland. The first had been out of the kingdom almost twenty years, from the time that he was tried for robbing the treasury; and therefore his knowledge and credibility are equal. The second may be allowed a more knowing witness, because I think it is not above a year since the house of commons ordered the attorney general to

to prosecute him, for endeavouring to take away the life of John Bingham esq. member of parliament, by perjury and subornation. He asserted, that he was forced to tally with his labourers for want of small money, which has often been practised in England by sir Ambrose Crawley, and others; but those who knew him better, give a different reason, if there be any truth at all in the fact, that he was forced to tally with his labourers not for want of halfpence, but of more substantial money; which is highly possible, because the race of suborners, forgers, perjurers, and ravishers, are usually people of no fortune, or of those who have run it out by their vices and profuseness. Mr. Finley, the third witness, honestly confessed, that he was ignorant whether Ireland wanted copper or not; but his only intention was to buy a certain quantity from Wood at a large discount, and sell them as well as he could; by which he hoped to get two or three thousand pounds for himself.

But suppose there were not one single halfpenny of copper coin in this whole kingdom, (which Mr. Wood seems to intend, unless we will come to his terms, as appears by employing his emissaries to buy up our old ones at a penny in the shilling more than they pass for) it could not be any real evil to us, although it might be some inconvenience. We have many sorts of small silver coins, to which they are strangers in England; such as the French threepences, fourpence-halfpennies, and eight-pence farthings, the Scotch fivepences and tenpences, beside their twentypences and three-and-four-pences, by which we are able to make change to a halfpenny of almost any piece of gold and silver; and

if

if we are driven to the expedient of a sealed card, with the little gold and silver still remaining, it will, I suppose, be somewhat better, than to have nothing left but Wood's adulterated copper, which he is neither obliged by his patent, nor HITHERTO able by his estate, to make good.

The report farther tells us, it must be admitted, that letters patents, under the great seal of Great Britain, for coining copper money for Ireland are legal and obligatory, a just and reasonable exercise of his majesty's royal prerogative, and in no manner derogatory, or invasive of any liberty or privilege of his subjects of Ireland. First, we desire to know, why his majesty's prerogative might not have been as well asserted by passing this patent in Ireland, and subjecting the several conditions of the contract to the inspection of those who are only * concerned, as was formerly done in the only * precedents for patents granted for coining in this kingdom, since the mixed money in queen Elizabeth's time, during the difficulties of a rebellion: whereas now, upon the greatest imposition that can possibly be practised, we must go to England with our complaints; where it has been for some time the fashion to think, and to affirm, that we cannot be too hardly used. Again, the report says, that such patents are obligatory. After long thinking, I am not able to find out, what can possibly be meant here by this word obligatory. The patent of Wood neither obliges him to utter his coin, nor us to take it; or if it did the latter, it would be so far void, because no pa-

* It should be—who 'alone' are concerned, both to avoid the equivoque, and the repetition of the same word—'only'—in the next line.

tent

tent can oblige the subject against law; unless an illegal patent passed in one kingdom, can bind another, and not itself.

Lastly, it is added, that such patents are in no manner derogatory, or invasive of any liberty or privilege of the king's subjects of Ireland. If this proposition be true, as it is here laid down, without any limitation either expressed or implied, it must follow, that a king of England may at any time coin copper money for Ireland, and oblige his subjects here to take a piece of copper under the value of half a farthing, for half a crown, as was practised by the late king James; and even without that arbitrary prince's excuse, from the necessity and exigencies of his affairs. If this be in no manner derogatory, nor invasive of any liberties or privileges of the subjects of Ireland, it ought to have been expressed what our liberties and privileges are, and whether we have any at all; for, in specifying the word Ireland, instead of saying his majesty's subjects, it would seem to insinuate, that we are not upon the same foot with our fellow-subjects in England; which, however the practice may have been, I hope will never be directly asserted; for I do not understand that Poining's act deprived us of our liberty, but only changed the manner of passing laws here (which however was a power most indirectly obtained) by leaving the negative to the two houses of parliament. But, waving all controversies relating to the legislature, no person, I believe, was ever yet so bold as to affirm, that the people of Ireland have not the same title to the benefits of the common law, with the rest of his majesty's subjects; and therefore, whatever liberties or privileges

leges the people of England enjoy by common law, we of Ireland have the same; so that, in my humble opinion, the word Ireland standing in that proposition, was, in the mildest interpretation, a lapse of the pen.

The report farther asserts, that the precedents are many, wherein cases of great importance to Ireland, and which immediately affected the interests of that kingdom, such as warrants, orders, and directions by the authority of the king and his predecessors, have been issued under the royal sign manual, without any previous reference or advice of his majesty's officers of Ireland, which have always had their due force, and have been punctually complied with and obeyed. It may be so, and I am heartily sorry for it; because it may prove an eternal source of discontent. However, among all these precedents, there is not one of a patent for coining money for Ireland.

There is nothing has perplexed me more than this doctrine of precedents. If a job is to be done, and upon searching records you find it has been done before, there will not want a lawyer to justify the legality of it by producing his precedents, without ever considering the motives and circumstances that first introduced them; the necessity, or turbulence, or iniquity of times; the corruptions of ministers, or the arbitrary disposition of the prince then reigning. And I have been told by persons eminent in the law, that the worst actions which human nature is capable of, may be justified by the same doctrine. How the first precedents began of determining cases of the highest importance to Ireland, and immediately affecting its interests, without

without any previous reference or advice to the king's officers here, may soon be accounted for. Before this kingdom was entirely reduced, by the submission of Tyrone in the last year of queen Elizabeth's reign, there was a period of four hundred years, which was a various scene of war and peace between the English pale, and the Irish natives; and the government of that part of this island, which lay in the English hands, was, in many things, under the immediate administration of the king: silver and copper were often coined here among us; and once at last upon great necessity, a mixed or base metal was sent from England. The reign of king James I was employed in settling the kingdom after Tyrone's rebellion; and this nation flourished extremely till the time of the massacre, 1641. In that difficult juncture of affairs, the nobility and gentry coined their own plate here in Dublin.

By all that I can discover, the copper coin of Ireland, for three hundred years past, consisted of small pence and halfpence; which particular men had license to coin, and were current only within certain towns and districts, according to the personal credit of the owner, who uttered them, and was bound to receive them again, whereof I have seen many sorts; neither have I heard of any patent granted for coining copper for Ireland, till the reign of king Charles the second, which was in the year 1680, to George Leg, lord Dartmouth; and renewed by king James the second, in the first year of his reign (1685) to John Knox. Both patents were passed in Ireland; and in both, the patentees were bound to receive their coin again, from

from any that would offer them twenty shillings of it, for which they were obliged to pay gold or silver.

The patents both of lord Dartmouth and Knox, were referred to the attorney-general here, and a report made accordingly; and both, as I have already said, were passed in this kingdom. Knox had only a patent for the remainder of the term granted to lord Dartmouth; the patent expired in 1701, and upon a petition by Roger Moor to have it renewed, the matter was referred hither; and upon the report of the attorney and solicitor, that it was not for his majesty's service, or interest of the nation, to have it renewed, it was rejected by king William. It should therefore seem very extraordinary, that a patent for coining copper halfpence, intended and professed for the good of the kingdom, should be passed, without once consulting that kingdom, for the good of which it is declared to be intended; and this, upon the application of a poor, private, obscure mechanick; and a patent of such a nature, that as soon as ever the kingdom is informed of its being passed, they cry out unanimously against it, as ruinous and destructive. The representatives of the nation in parliament, and the privy council, address the king to have it recalled; yet the patentee, such a one as I have described, shall prevail to have this patent approved; and his private interest shall weigh down the application of a whole kingdom. St. Paul says, All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient. We are answered, that this patent is lawful: but is it expedient? We read that the high priest said, It was expedient that one man should die for the people;

ple; and this was a most wicked proposition: but that a whole nation should die for one man, was never heard of before.

But, because much weight is laid on the precedents of other patents for coining copper for Ireland, I will set this matter in as clear a light as I can. Whoever has read the report, will be apt to think, that a dozen precedents at least could be produced of copper coined for Ireland, by virtue of patents passed in England, and that the coinage was there too; whereas I am confident, there cannot be one precedent shown of a patent passed in England for coining copper for Ireland, for above a hundred years past; and if there were any before, it must be in times of confusion. The only patents I could ever hear of, are those already mentioned to lord Dartmouth and Knox; the former in 1680, and the latter in 1685. Now let us compare these patents with that granted to Wood. First, the patent to Knox, which was under the same conditions as that granted to lord Dartmouth, was passed in Ireland; the government, and the attorney and solicitor general, making report that it would be useful to this kingdom.

The patent was passed with the advice of the king's council here; the patentee was obliged to receive his coin from those who thought themselves surcharged, and to give gold and silver for it. Lastly, the patentee was to pay only 16l. 13s. 4d. per annum to the crown. Then, as to the execution of that patent; first, I find the halfpence were milled, which, as it is of great use to prevent counterfeits, (and therefore industriously avoided by Wood) so it was an addition to the charge of coinage,

coinage. And as for the weight and goodness of the metal, I have several halfpence now by me, many of which weigh a ninth part more than those coined by Wood, and bear the fire and hammer a great deal better, and, which is no trifle, the impression is fairer and deeper. I grant indeed that many of the latter coinage, yield in weight to some of Wood's, by a fraud natural to such patentees; but not so immediately after the grant, and before the coin grew current: for this circumstance Mr. Wood must serve for a precedent in future times.

Let us now examine this new patent granted to William Wood. It passed upon very small suggestions of his own, and of a few confederates: it passed in England without the least reference hither; it passed unknown to the very lord lieutenant, then in England. Wood is empowered to coin one hundred and eight thousand pounds, and all the officers in the kingdom (civil and military) are commanded in the report to countenance and assist him. Knox had only power to utter what we would take, and was obliged to receive his coin back again at our demand, and to enter into security for so doing. Wood's halfpence are not milled, and therefore more easily counterfeited by himself, as well as by others. Wood pays a thousand pounds per annum for fourteen years; Knox paid only sixteen pounds thirteen shillings and four pence per annum for twenty-one years.

It was the report, that set me the example of making a comparison between those two patents, wherein the committee was grossly misled by the false representation of William Wood; as it was,

by another assertion, that seven hundred tons of copper were coined during the twenty-one years of lord Dartmouth's and Knox's patents. Such a quantity of copper, at the rate of two shillings and eight pence per pound, would amount to about a hundred and ninety thousand pounds; which was very near as much as the current cash of the kingdom in those days; yet during that period, Ireland was never known to have too much copper coin; and for several years there was no coining at all: besides, I am assured, that upon inquiring into the customhouse books, all the copper imported into this kingdom from 1683 to 1692, which includes eight years of the twenty-one (beside one year allowed for the troubles) did not exceed forty-seven tons. And we cannot suppose even that small quantity to have been wholly applied to coinage: so that I believe there was never any comparison more unluckily made, or so destructive of the design for which it was produced.

The psalmist reckons it an effect of God's anger, when he selleth his people for nought, and taketh no money for them. That we have greatly offended God by the wickedness of our lives, is not to be disputed: but our king we have not offended in word or deed; and although he be God's vicegerent upon earth, he will not punish us for any offences, except those we shall commit against his legal authority, his sacred person (which God preserve) or the laws of the land.

The report is very profuse in arguments, that Ireland is in great want of copper money: who were the witnesses to prove it, has been shown already: but, in the name of God, who are to be judges?

judges? Does not the nation best know its own wants? Both houses of parliament, the privy council, and the whole body of the people, declare the contrary. Or, let the wants be what they will, we desire they may not be supplied by Mr. Wood: we know our own wants but too well; they are many, and grievous to be born, but quite of another kind. Let England be satisfied: as things go, they will in a short time have all our gold and silver, and may keep their adulterate copper at home, for we are determined not to purchase it with our manufactures, which Wood has graciously offered to accept. Our wants are not so bad by a hundredth part, as the method he has taken to supply them. He has already tried his faculty in New-England; and I hope he will meet at least with an equal reception here; what that was, I leave to publick intelligence. I am supposing a wild case; that if there should be any persons already receiving a monstrous pension out of this kingdom, who were instrumental in procuring the patent, they have not either well consulted their own interests, or Wood must put more dross into his copper, and still diminish its weight.

Upon Wood's complaint, that the officers of the king's revenue here, had already given orders to all the inferiour officers not to receive any of his coin; the report says that this cannot but be looked upon as a very extraordinary proceeding, and contrary to the powers given in the patent. The committee say, they cannot advise his majesty to give directions to the officers of the revenue here, not to receive or utter any of the said coin, as has been desired in the addresses of both houses; but, on the

contrary, they think it both just and reasonable, that the king should immediately give orders to the *commissioners* of the revenue, etc. to revoke all orders, etc. that may have been given by them, to hinder or obstruct the receiving of the said coin. And accordingly, we are told, such orders are arrived. Now this was a cast of Wood's politicks; for his information was wholly false and groundless, which he knew very well; and that the commissioners of the revenue here were all, except one, sent us from England, and love their employments too well to have taken such a step: but Wood was wise enough to consider, that such orders of revocation would be an open declaration of the crown in his favour, would put the government here under a difficulty, would make a noise, and possibly create some terrour in the poor people of Ireland. And one great point he has gained, that although any orders of revocation will be needless, yet a new order is to be sent (and perhaps is already here) to the commissioners of the revenue, and all the king's officers in Ireland, that Wood's halfpence be suffered and permitted, without any let, suit, trouble, molestation, or denial of any of the king's officers or ministers whatsoever, to pass, and be received as current money by such as shall be willing to receive them. In this order there is no exception; and therefore, as far as I can judge, it includes all officers, both civil and military, from the lord high chancellor to a justice of peace, and from the general to an ensign, so that Wood's project is not likely to fail for want of managers enough. For my own part, as things stand, I have but little regret to find myself out of the number; and therefore

fore I shall continue in all humility to exhort and warn my fellow-subjects, never to receive or utter this coin, which will reduce the kingdom to beggary, by much quicker and larger steps, than have hitherto been taken.

But it is needless to argue any longer. The matter is come to an issue. His majesty, pursuant to the law, has left the field open between Wood and the kingdom of Ireland. Wood has liberty to offer his coin, and we have law, reason, liberty, and necessity to refuse it. A knavish jockey may ride an old foundered jade about the market, but none are obliged to buy it. I hope the words voluntary, and willing to receive it, will be understood and applied in their true natural meaning, as commonly understood by protestants. For, if a fierce captain comes to my shop to buy six yards of scarlet cloth, followed by a porter laden with a sack of Wood's coin upon his shoulders; if we are agreed about the price, and my scarlet lies ready cut upon the compter; if he then gives me the word of command to receive my money in Wood's coin, and calls me a disaffected, jacobite dog, for refusing it (although I am as loyal a subject as himself, and without hire) and thereupon seizes my cloth, leaving me the price in this odious copper, and bids me take my remedy: in this case I shall hardly be brought to think, that I am left to my own will. I shall therefore on such occasions first order the porter aforesaid to go off with his pack; and then see the money in silver and gold in my possession, before I cut or measure my cloth. But, if a common soldier drinks his pot first, and then offers payment in Wood's halfpence, the landlady may

be under some difficulty; for, if she complains to his captain or ensign, they are likewise officers included in this general order for encouraging these halfpence to pass as current money. If she goes to a justice of peace, he is also an officer, to whom this general order is directed. I do therefore advise her to follow my practice, which I have already begun, and be paid for her goods before she parts with them. However, I should have been content, for some reasons, that the military gentlemen had been excepted by name; because I have heard it said, that their discipline is best confined within their own district.

His majesty, in the conclusion of his answer to the address of the house of lords against Wood's coin, is pleased to say, that he will do every thing in his power to the satisfaction of his people. It should seem, therefore, that the recalling of the patent is not to be understood as a thing in his power. But however, since the law does not oblige us to receive this coin, and consequently the patent leaves it to our voluntary choice, there is nothing remaining to preserve us from ruin, but that the whole kingdom should continue in a firm, determinate resolution, never to receive or utter this fatal coin. After which, let the officers, to whom these orders are directed (I would willingly except the military) come with their exhortations, their arguments, and their eloquence, to persuade us to find our interest in our undoing. Let Wood and his accomplices travel about the country with cart-loads of their ware, and see who will take it off their hands; there will be no fear of his being robbed, for a highwayman would scorn to touch it.

I am

I am only in pain how the commissioners of the revenue will proceed in this juncture; because, I am told, they are obliged by an act of parliament to take nothing but gold and silver in payment for his majesty's customs: and I think they cannot justly offer this coinage of Mr. Wood to others, unless they will be content to receive it themselves.

The sum of the whole is this: the committee advises the king to send immediate orders to all his officers here, that Wood's coin be suffered and permitted without any let, suit, trouble, etc. to pass, and be received as current money by such as shall be willing to receive the same. It is probable, that the first willing receivers may be those, who must receive it whether they will or not, at least under the penalty of losing an office. But the landed undepending men, the merchants, the shopkeepers, and bulk of the people, I hope, and am almost confident, will never receive it. What must the consequence be? The owners will sell it for as much as they can get. Wood's halfpence will come to be offered for six a penny (yet then he will be a sufficient gainer) and the necessary receivers will be losers of two thirds in their salaries or pay.

This puts me in mind of a passage I was told many years ago in England. At a quarter-session in Leicester, the justices had wisely decreed to take off a halfpenny in a quart from the price of ale. One of them, who came in after the thing was determined, being informed of what had passed, said thus: Gentlemen, you have made an order, that ale should be sold in our county for three halfpence a quart:

a quart; I desire you will now make another, to appoint who must drink it; for by G—— I will not.

I must beg leave to caution your lordships and worships in one particular. Wood has graciously promised to load us at present only with forty thousand pounds of his coin, till the exigencies of the kingdom require the rest. I entreat you will never suffer Mr. Wood to be a judge of your exigencies. While there is one piece of silver or gold left in the kingdom, he will call it an exigency. He will double his present *quantum* by stealth as soon as he can; he will pour his own raps and counterfeits upon us; France and Holland will do the same; nor will our own coiners at home be behind them: to confirm which, I have now in my pocket a rap, or counterfeit halfpenny, in imitation of his; but so ill performed, that in my conscience I believe it is not of his coining.

I must now desire your lordships and worships, that you will give great allowance for this long undigested paper. I find myself to have gone into several repetitions, which were the effects of haste, while new thoughts fell in to add something to what I had said before. I think I may affirm, that I have fully answered every paragraph in the report; which * although it be not unartfully drawn, and is perfectly in the spirit of a pleader, who can find the most plausible topicks in behalf of his client, yet there was no great skill required, to detect the

* This sentence is altogether ungramatical: 'which' here is a nominative without any verb to which it refers. It ought to have been 'in' which, (although it be not, &c.) there was no great skill required to detect the many mistakes contained.

many

many mistakes contained in it; which, however, are by no means to be charged upon the right honourable committee, but upon the most false, impudent, and fraudulent representations of Wood and his accomplices. I desire one particular may dwell upon your minds, although I have mentioned it more than once; that after all the weight laid upon precedents, there is not one produced in the whole report of a patent for coining copper in England to pass in Ireland; and only two patents referred to (for indeed there were no more) which were both passed in Ireland, by references to the king's council here, both less advantageous to the coiner than this of Wood; and in both, securities given to receive the coin at every call, and give gold and silver in lieu of it. This demonstrates the most flagrant falsehood and impudence of Wood, by which he would endeavour to make the right honourable committee, his instruments (for his own illegal and exorbitant gain) to ruin a kingdom, which has deserved quite different treatment.

I am very sensible, that such a work as I have undertaken, might have worthily employed a much better pen: but when a house is attempted to be robbed, it often happens the weakest in the family, runs first to stop the door. All the assistance I had, were some informations from an eminent person; whereof I am afraid I have spoiled a few, by endeavouring to make them of a piece with my own productions, and the rest I was not able to manage: I was in the case of David, who could not move in the armour of Saul; and therefore I rather chose to attack this uncircumcised Philistine (Wood I mean)

I mean) with a sling and a stone. And I may say for Wood's honour as well as my own, that he resembles Goliah in many circumstances, very applicable to the present purpose: for, Goliah had a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass, and he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. In short, he was like Mr. Wood, all over brass, and he defied the armies of the living God. Goliah's conditions of combat were likewise the same with those of Wood: if he prevail against us, then shall we be his servants. But if it happens that I prevail over him, I renounce the other part of the condition; he shall never be a servant of mine; for I do not think him fit to be trusted in any honest man's shop.

I will conclude with my humble desire and request, which I made in my second letter, that your lordships and worships, would please to order a declaration to be drawn up, expressing in the strongest terms your resolutions never to receive or utter any of Wood's halfpence, or farthings; and forbidding your tenants to receive them: that the said declaration may be signed by as many persons as possible*, who have estates in this kingdom, and be sent down to your several tenants aforesaid.

And if the dread of Wood's halfpence should continue until next quarter-sessions, which I hope

* A declaration pursuant to this request was signed soon after by the most considerable persons of the kingdom, which was universally spread, and of great use.

it

it will not, the gentlemen of every county will then have a fair opportunity of declaring against them with unanimity and zeal.

I am, with the greatest respect,

(May it please your lordships and worships)

your most dutiful and

obedient servant,

August 25, 1724.

M. B.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

TO THE WHOLE

PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

My dear countrymen,

HAVING already written three LETTERS upon so disagreeable a subject as Mr. Wood and his halfpence, I conceived my task was at an end; but I find that cordials must be frequently applied to weak constitutions, political as well as natural. A people long used to hardships, lose by degrees the very notions of liberty; they look upon themselves as creatures of mercy, and that all impositions laid on them by a stronger hand, are, in the phrase of the report, legal and obligatory. Hence proceed that poverty and lowness of spirit, to which a kingdom may be subject, as well as a particular person. And when Esau came fainting from the field at the point to die, it is no wonder that he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.

I thought I had sufficiently shown to all who could want instruction, by what methods they might safely proceed, whenever this coin should be offered to them: and I believe there has not been, for

for many ages, an example of any kingdom so firmly united in a point of great importance, as this of ours is at present against that detestable fraud. But however, it so happens, that some weak people begin to be alarmed anew by rumours industriously spread. Wood prescribes to the newsmongers in London what they are to write. In one of their papers, published here by some obscure printer, and certainly with a bad design, we are told, that the papists in Ireland have entered into an association against his coin; although it be notoriously known that they never once offered to stir in the matter; so that the two houses of parliament, the privy council, the great number of corporations, the lord mayor and aldermen of Dublin, the grand juries, and principal gentlemen of several counties, are stigmatised in a lump under the name of papists.

This impostor and his crew do likewise give out, that by refusing to receive his dross for sterling, we dispute the king's prerogative, are grown ripe for rebellion, and ready to shake off the dependency of Ireland upon the crown of England. To countenance which reports, he has published a paragraph in another newspaper, to let us know, that the lord-lieutenant is ordered to come over immediately to settle his halfpence.

I entreat you, my dear countrymen, not to be under the least concern upon these, and the like rumours, which are no more than the last howls of a dog dissected alive, as I hope he has sufficiently been. These calumnies are the only reserve that is left him. For, surely our continued and (almost) unexampled loyalty, will never be called in question

tion for not suffering ourselves to be robbed of all that we have, by one obscure ironmonger.

As to disputing the king's prerogative, give me leave to explain to those who are ignorant, what the meaning of that word prerogative, is.

The kings of these realms enjoy several powers, wherein the laws have not interposed; so they can make war and peace without the consent of parliament, and this is a very great prerogative; but, if the parliament does not approve of the war, the king must bear the charge of it out of his own purse; and this is as great a check on the crown. So, the king has a prerogative to coin money without consent of parliament: but he cannot compel the subject to take that money, except it be sterling, gold or silver; because herein he is limited by law. Some princes have indeed extended their prerogative farther than the law allowed them: wherein, however, the lawyers of succeeding ages, as fond as they are of precedents, have never dared to justify them. But, to say the truth, it is only of late times that prerogative has been fixed and ascertained. For, whoever reads the history of England, will find that some former kings, and those none of the worst, have, upon several occasions, ventured to control the laws, with very little ceremony or scruple, even later than the days of queen Elizabeth. In her reign, that pernicious counsel of sending base money hither, very narrowly failed of losing the kingdom; being complained of by the lord deputy, the council, and the whole body of the English here: so that, soon after her death, it was recalled by her successor, and lawful money paid in exchange.

Having

Having thus given you some notion of what is meant by the king's prerogative, as far as a tradesman can be thought capable of explaining it, I will only add the opinion of the great lord Bacon; that, as God governs the world by the settled laws of nature, which he has made, and never transcends those laws but upon high, important occasions; so, among earthly princes, those are the wisest and the best, who govern by the known laws of the country, and seldomest make use of their prerogative.

Now, here you may see, that the vile accusation of Wood and his accomplices, charging us with disputing the king's prerogative, by refusing his brass, can have no place; because compelling the subject to take any coin, which is not sterling, is no part of the king's prerogative; and I am very confident, if it were so, we should be the last of his people to dispute it; as well from that inviolable loyalty we have always paid to his majesty, as from the treatment we might in such a case justly expect from some, who seem to think we have neither common sense nor common senses. But, God be thanked, the best of them are only our fellow subjects, and not our masters. One great merit, I am sure we have, which those of English birth can have no pretence to, that our ancestors reduced this kingdom to the obedience of England; for which we have been rewarded with a worse climate, the privilege of being governed by laws to which we do not consent, a ruined trade, a house of peers without jurisdiction, almost an incapacity for all employments, and the dread of Wood's halfpence.

But we are so far from disputing the king's prerogative in coining, that we own he has power to give a patent to any man for setting his royal image and superscription upon whatever materials he pleases; and liberty to the patentee to offer them in any country from England to Japan, only attended with one small limitation, that nobody alive is obliged to take them.

Upon these considerations, I was ever against all recourse to England for a remedy against the present impending evil; especially when I observed, that the addresses of both houses, after long expectance produced nothing but a REPORT altogether in favour of Wood; upon which I made some observations in a former letter, and might at least have made as many more; for it is a paper of as singular a nature as I ever beheld.

But I mistake; for, before this report was made, his majesty's most gracious answer to the house of lords was sent over and printed; wherein are these words, granting the patent for coining halfpence and farthings, AGREEABLE TO THE PRACTICE OF HIS ROYAL PREDECESSORS, etc. That king Charles II, and king James II, (AND THEY ONLY) did grant patents for this purpose, is indisputable, and I have shown it at large. Their patents were passed under the great seal of Ireland, by references to Ireland, the copper to be coined in Ireland; the patentee was bound, on demand, to receive his coin back in Ireland; and pay silver and gold in return. Wood's patent was made under the great seal of England, the brass coined in England, not the least reference made to Ireland; the sum immense, and the patentee under no obligation

obligation to receive it again, and give good money for it. This I only mention, because, in my private thoughts, I have sometimes made a query, whether the penner of those words in his majesty's most gracious answer, AGREEABLE TO THE PRACTICE OF HIS ROYAL PREDECESSORS, had maturely considered the several circumstances, which, in my poor opinion, seem to make a difference.

Let me now say something concerning the other great cause of some people's fear, as Wood has taught the London newswriter to express it, that his excellency the lord lieutenant is coming over to settle Wood's halfpence.

We know very well, that the lords lieutenants for several years past, have not thought this kingdom worthy the honour of their residence, longer than was absolutely necessary for the king's business; which, consequently, wanted no speed in the dispatch. And therefore it naturally fell into most men's thoughts, that a new governor, coming at an unusual time, must portend some unusual business to be done; especially if the common report be true, that the parliament, prorogued to I know not when, is by a new summons, revoking that prorogation, to assemble soon after his arrival; for which extraordinary proceeding, the lawyers on the other side the water, have, by great good fortune, found two precedents.

All this being granted, it can never enter into my head, that so little a creature as Wood, could find credit enough with the king and his ministers, to have the lord lieutenant of Ireland sent hither in a hurry upon his errand.

For, let us take the whole matter nakedly, as it lies before us, without the refinements of some people, with which we have nothing to do. Here is a patent granted under the great seal of England, upon false suggestions, to one William Wood, for coining copper halfpence for Ireland: the parliament here, upon apprehensions of the worst consequences from the said patent, address the king to have it recalled: this is refused, and a committee of the privy council report to his majesty, that Wood has performed the conditions of his patent. He then is left to do the best he can with his halfpence, no man being obliged to receive them; the people here, being likewise left to themselves, unite as one man, resolving they will have nothing to do with his ware. By this plain account of the fact, it is manifest, that the king and his ministry are wholly out of the case, and the matter is left to be disputed between him and us. Will any man therefore attempt to persuade me, that a lord lieutenant is to be dispatched over in great haste before the ordinary time, and a parliament summoned by anticipating a prorogation, merely to put a hundred thousand pounds into the pocket of a sharper, by the ruin of a most loyal kingdom?

But supposing all this to be true: by what arguments could a lord lieutenant prevail on the same parliament, which addressed with so much zeal and earnestness against this evil, to pass it into a law? I am sure their opinion of Wood and his project are not mended since their last prorogation: and, supposing those methods should be used, which detractors tell us have been sometimes put in practice for gaining votes, it is well known, that in this kingdom

kingdom there are few employments to be given; and if there were more, it is as well known to whose share they must fall.

But, because great numbers of you are altogether ignorant of the affairs of your country, I will tell you some reasons why there are so few employments to be disposed of in this kingdom. All considerable offices for life here are possessed by those, to whom the reversions were granted; and these have been generally followers of the chief governors, or persons who had interest in the court of England: so the lord Berkely of Stratton holds that great office of master of the rolls; the lord Palmerstown is first remembrancer, worth near 2000l. per annum. One Dodington, secretary to the earl of Pembroke, begged the reversion of clerk of the pells, worth 2500l. a year, which he now enjoys by the death of the lord Newtown. Mr. Southwell is secretary of state, and the earl of Burlington lord high treasurer of Ireland by inheritance. These are only a few among many others, which I have been told of, but cannot remember. Nay, the reversion of several employments during pleasure, is granted the same way. This, among many others, is a circumstance, whereby the kingdom of Ireland is distinguished from all other nations upon earth, and makes it so difficult an affair to get into a civil employ, that Mr. Addison was forced to purchase an old obscure place, called keeper of the records in Bermingham's tower, of ten pounds a year, and to get a salary of 400l. annexed to it, though all the records there are not worth half a crown either for curiosity or use. And we lately saw a favourite

secretary * descend to be master of the revels, which by his credit and extortion he has made pretty considerable. I say nothing of the under treasurership, worth about 9000l. a year, nor of the commissioners of the revenue, four of whom generally live in England; for I think none of these are granted in reversion. But the jest is, that I have known, upon occasion, some of these absent officers as keen against the interest of Ireland, as if they had never been indebted to her for a single groat.

I confess I have been sometimes tempted to wish, that this project of Wood might succeed; because I reflected with some pleasure, what a jolly crew it would bring over among us of lords and 'squires, and pensioners of both sexes, and officers civil and military, where we should live together as merry and sociable as beggars; only with this one abatement, that we should neither have meat to feed, nor manufactures to clothe us, unless we could be content to prance about in coats of mail, or eat brass as ostriches do iron.

I return from this digression to that which gave me the occasion of making it: and I believe you are now convinced, that if the parliament of Ireland were as temptable as any other assembly within a mile of Christendom (which God forbid) yet the managers must of necessity fail, for want of tools to work with. But I will yet go one step farther, by supposing that a hundred new employments were erected, on purpose to gratify compliers; yet still an insuperable difficulty would remain.

* Mr. Hopkins, secretary to the duke of Grafton.

main. For it happens, I know not how, that money is neither whig nor tory, neither of town nor country party; and it is not improbable, that a gentleman would rather choose to live upon his own estate, which brings him gold and silver, than with the addition of an employment, when his rents and salary must both be paid in Wood's brass, at above eighty per cent discount.

For these, and many other reasons, I am confident you need not be under the least apprehensions from the sudden expectation of the lord lieutenant*, while we continue in our present hearty disposition, to alter which, no suitable temptation can possibly be offered. And if, as I have often asserted from the best authority, the law has not left a power in the crown to force any money, except sterling, upon the subject; much less can the crown devolve such a power upon another.

This I speak with the utmost respect to the person and dignity of his excellency the lord Carteret, whose character was lately given me by a gentleman that has known him from his first appearance in the world: that gentleman describes him as a young man of great accomplishments, excellent learning, regular in his life, and of much spirit and vivacity. He has since, as I have heard, been employed abroad; was principal secretary of state; and is now about the thirty-seventh year of his age appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland. From such a governor, this kingdom may reasonably hope for as much prosperity, as, under so many discouragements, it can be capable of receiving.

* Lord Carteret, afterward earl Granville.

It is true indeed, that within the memory of man, there have been governors of so much dexterity, as to carry points of terrible consequence to this kingdom, by their power with those who are in office; and by their arts in managing or deluding others with oaths, affability, and even with dinners. If Wood's brass had, in those times, been upon the anvil, it is obvious enough to conceive what methods would have been taken. Depending persons would have been told in plain terms, that it was a service expected from them, under the pain of the publick business being put into more complying hands. Others would be allured by promises. To the country gentlemen, beside good words, burgundy, and closetting, it might perhaps have been hinted, how kindly it would be taken to comply with a royal patent, although it were not compulsory: that if any inconveniencies ensued, it might be made up with other graces or favours hereafter: that gentlemen ought to consider, whether it were prudent or safe to disgust England: they would be desired to think of some good bills for encouraging of trade, and setting the poor to work: some farther acts against popery, and for uniting protestants. There would be solemn engagements, that we should never be troubled with above forty thousand pounds in his coin, and all of the best and weightiest sort, for which we should only give our manufactures in exchange, and keep our gold and silver at home. Perhaps a seasonable report of some invasion would have been spread in the most proper juncture; which is a great smoother of rubs in publick proceedings: and we should have been told, that this was

no

no time to create differences, when the kingdom was in danger.

These, I say, and the like methods, would, in corrupt times, have been taken, to let in this deluge of brass among us. And I am confident, even then, would not have succeeded; much less under the administration of so excellent a person as the lord CARTERET; and in a country where the people of all ranks, parties, and denominations, are convinced to a man, that the utter undoing of themselves and their posterity for ever, will be dated from the admission of that execrable coin: that if it once enters, it can be no more confined to a small or moderate quantity, than a plague can be confined to a few families; and that no equivalent can be given by any earthly power, any more than a dead carcase can be recovered to life by a cordial.

There is one comfortable circumstance in this universal opposition to Mr. Wood, that the people sent over hither from England, to fill up our vacancies, ecclesiastical, civil, and military, are all on our side. Money, the great divider of the world, has, by a strange revolution, been the great uniter of a most divided people. Who would leave a hundred pounds a year in England (a country of freedom) to be paid a thousand in Ireland out of Wood's exchequer? The gentleman they have lately made primate*, would never quit his seat in an English house of lords, and his preferments at Oxford and Bristol, worth twelve hundred pounds a year, for four times the denomination here, but not half the value; therefore I expect to hear he will be as good an Irish-

* Doctor Hugh Boulter.

man,

man, at least upon this one article, as any of his brethren, or even of us, who have had the misfortune to be born in this island. For, those, who in the common phrase do not come hither to learn the language, would never change a better country for a worse, to receive brass instead of gold.

Another slander spread by Wood and his emissaries, is, that by opposing him, we discover an inclination to shake off our dependence upon the crown of England. Pray observe how important a person is this same William Wood; and how the publick weal of two kingdoms is involved in his private interest. First, all those who refuse to take his coin are papists; for he tells us, that none but papists are associated against him. Secondly, they dispute the king's prerogative. Thirdly, they are ripe for rebellion. And, fourthly, they are going to shake off their dependence upon the crown of England; that is to say, they are going to choose another king; for there can be no other meaning in this expression, however some may pretend to strain it.

And this gives me an opportunity of explaining, to those who are ignorant, another point, which has often swelled in my breast. Those who come over hither to us from England, and some weak people among ourselves, whenever in discourse we make mention of liberty and property, shake their heads, and tell us, that Ireland is a depending kingdom; as if they would seem by this phrase to intend, that the people of Ireland are in some state of slavery or dependence different from those of England: whereas a depending kingdom is a modern term of art, unknown

known as I have heard to all ancient civilians, and writers upon government; and Ireland is, on the contrary, called in some statutes an imperial crown, as held only from God; which is as high a style as any kingdom is capable of receiving. Therefore, by this expression, a depending kingdom, there is no more to be understood, than that by a statute made here in the thirty-third year of Henry VIII, the king, and his successors, are to be kings imperial of this realm, as united and knit to the imperial crown of England. I have looked over all the English and Irish statutes, without finding any law that makes Ireland depend upon England, any more than England does upon Ireland. We have indeed obliged ourselves to have the same king with them; and consequently they are obliged to have the same king with us. For the law was made by our own parliament; and our ancestors then were not such fools (whatever they were in the preceding reign) to bring themselves under I know not what dependence, which is now talked of, without any ground of law, reason, or common sense.

Let whoever think otherwise, I, M. B. drapier, desire to be excepted: for I declare, next under God, I depend only on the king my sovereign, and on the laws of my own country. And I am so far from depending upon the people of England, that if they should ever rebel against my sovereign (which God forbid) I would be ready, at the first command from his majesty, to take arms against them, as some of my countrymen did against theirs at Preston. And if such a rebellion should prove so successful as to fix the pretender on the throne of England, I would

would venture to transgress that statute so far, as to lose every drop of my blood to hinder him from being king of Ireland*.

It is true indeed, that within the memory of man, the parliaments of England have sometimes assumed the power of binding this kingdom by laws enacted there; wherein they were at first openly opposed (as far as truth, reason, and justice are capable of opposing) by the famous Mr. Molineux, an English gentleman born here, as well as by several of the greatest patriots and best whigs in England; but the love and torrent of power prevailed. Indeed the arguments on both sides were invincible. For, in reason, all government without the consent of the governed is the very definition of slavery: but in fact, eleven men well armed will certainly subdue one single man in his shirt. But I have done: for those who have used power to cramp liberty, have gone so far as to resent even the liberty of complaining; although a man upon the rack was never known to be refused the liberty of roaring as loud as he thought fit.

And as we are apt to sink too much under unreasonable fears, so we are too soon inclined to be raised by groundless hopes, according to the nature of all consumptive bodies like ours. Thus it has been given about for several days past, that somebody in England empowered a second somebody, to write to a third somebody here, to assure us that we should no more be troubled with these halfpence. And this is reported to have been done by

* This paragraph gave great offence. See Letter V.

the

the same person *, who is said to have sworn some months ago, that he would ram them down our throats, though I doubt they would stick in our stomachs: but whichever of these reports be true or false, it is no concern of ours. For, in this point, we have nothing to do with English ministers: and I should be sorry to leave it in their power to redress this grievance, or to enforce it; for the report of the committee has given me a surfeit. The remedy is wholly in your own hands; and therefore I have digressed a little, in order to refresh and continue that spirit so seasonably raised among you; and to let you see, that by the laws of GOD, of NATURE, of NATIONS, and of your COUNTRY, you ARE and OUGHT to be as FREE a people as your brethren in England.

If the pamphlets published at London by Wood and his journeymen, in defence of his cause, were reprinted here, and our countrymen could be persuaded to read them, they would convince you of his wicked design, more than all I shall ever be able to say. In short, I make him a perfect saint, in comparison of what he appears to be, from the writings of those whom he hires to justify his project. But he is so far master of the field (let others guess the reason) that no London printer dare publish any paper written in favour of Ireland: and here nobody has yet been so bold as to publish any thing in favour of him.

There was, a few days ago, a pamphlet sent me of near fifty pages, written in favour of Mr. Wood and his coinage, printed in London: it is not worth

* Mr. Walpole, afterward earl of Orford.

answering,

answering, because probably it will never be published here. But it gave me occasion to reflect upon an unhappiness we lie under, that the people of England are utterly ignorant of our case; which however is no wonder, since it is a point they do not in the least concern themselves about, farther than perhaps as a subject of discourse in a coffee-house, when they have nothing else to talk of. For I have reason to believe, that no minister ever gave himself the trouble of reading any papers written in our defence, because I suppose their opinions are already determined, and are formed wholly upon the reports of Wood and his accomplices; else it would be impossible that any man could have the impudence to write such a pamphlet as I have mentioned.

Our neighbours, whose understandings are just upon a level with ours, (which perhaps are none of the brightest) have a strong contempt for most nations, but especially for Ireland. They look upon us as a sort of savage Irish, whom our ancestors conquered several hundred years ago. And if I should describe the Britons to you as they were in Cæsar's time, when they painted their bodies, or clothed themselves with the ſkins of beasts, I should act full as reasonably as they do. However, they are so far to be excused in relation to the present subject, that hearing only one side of the cause, and having neither opportunity nor curiosity to examine the other, they believe a lie merely for their ease; and conclude, because Mr. Wood pretends to power, he has also reason on his side.

Therefore, to let you see how this case is represented in England by Wood and his adherents, I have

have thought it proper to extract out of that pamphlet, a few of those notorious falsehoods, in point of fact and reasoning, contained therein; the knowledge whereof will confirm my countrymen in their own right sentiments, when they will see, by comparing both, how much their enemies are in the wrong.

First, the writer positively asserts, that Wood's halfpence were current among us for several months, with the universal approbation of all people, without one single gainsayer; and we all to a man, thought ourselves happy in having them.

Secondly, he affirms, that we were drawn into dislike of them only by some cunning, evil designing men among us, who opposed this patent of Wood to get another for themselves.

Thirdly, that those who most declared at first against Wood's patent, were the very men who intend to get another for their own advantage.

Fourthly, that our parliament and privy council, the lord mayor and aldermen of Dublin, the grand juries and merchants, and in short the whole kingdom, nay, the very dogs (as he expresses it) were fond of those halfpence, till they were inflamed by those few designing persons aforesaid.

Fifthly, he says directly, that all those who opposed the halfpence, were papists, and enemies to king George.

Thus far I am confident, the most ignorant among you, can safely swear, from your own knowledge, that the author is a most notorious liar in every article; the direct contrary being so manifest to the whole kingdom, that, if occasion required, we might

might get it confirmed under five hundred thousand hands.

Sixthly, he would persuade us, that if we sell five shillings worth of our goods or manufactures for two shillings and four pence worth of copper, although the copper were melted down, and that we could get five shillings in gold and silver for the said goods; yet to take the said two shillings and four pence in copper, would be greatly for our advantage.

And, lastly, he makes us a very fair offer, as empowered by Wood, that if we will take off two hundred thousand pounds in his halfpence for our goods, and likewise pay him three per cent interest for thirty years for a hundred and twenty thousand pounds (at which he computes the coinage above the intrinsick value of the copper) for the loan of his coin, he will after that time give us good money for what halfpence will be then left.

Let me place this offer in as clear a light as I can, to show the insupportable villany and impudence of that incorrigible wretch. First (says he) I will send two hundred thousand pounds of my coin into your country: the copper I compute to be, in real value, eighty thousand pounds, and I charge you with a hundred and twenty thousand pounds for the coinage; so that you see, I lend you a hundred and twenty thousand pounds for thirty years; for which you shall pay me three per cent, that is to say, three thousand six hundred pounds per annum, which in thirty years will amount to a hundred and eight thousand pounds. And when these thirty years are expired, return me my copper, and I will give you good money for it.

This

This is the proposal made to us by Wood in that pamphlet, written by one of his commissioners: and the author is supposed to be the same infamous Coleby, one of his under swearers at the committee of council, who was tried for robbing the treasury here, where he was an under clerk.

By this proposal, he will first, receive two hundred thousand pounds in goods or sterling, for as much copper as he values at eighty thousand pounds, but in reality not worth thirty thousand pounds. Secondly, he will receive for interest a hundred and eight thousand pounds: and when our children come thirty years hence to return his halfpence upon his executors (for before that time he will be probably gone to his own place) those executors will very reasonably reject them as raps and counterfeits, which they will be, and millions of them of his own coinage.

Methinks I am fond of such a dealer as this, who mends every day upon our hands like a Dutch reckoning; wherein if you dispute the unreasonableness and exorbitance of the bill, the landlord shall bring it up every time with new additions.

Although these, and the like pamphlets, published by Wood in London are altogether unknown here, where nobody could read them without as much indignation, as contempt would allow; yet I thought it proper to give you a specimen how the man employs his time, where he rides alone without any creature to contradict him; while our FEW FRIENDS there wonder at our silence: and the English in general, if they think of this matter at all, impute our refusal to wilfulness or disaffection,

just as Wood and his hirelings are pleased to represent.

But although our arguments are not suffered to be printed in England, yet the consequence will be of little moment. Let Wood endeavour to persuade the people there, that we ought to receive his coin; and let me convince our people here, that they ought to reject it, under pain of our utter undoing; and then let him do his best and his worst.

Before I conclude, I must beg leave, in all humility, to tell Mr. Wood that he is guilty of great indiscretion, by causing so honourable a name as that of Mr. Walpole, to be mentioned so often, and in such a manner, upon this occasion. A short paper printed at Bristol, and reprinted here, reports Mr. Wood to say, that he wonders at the impudence and insolence of the Irish in refusing his coin, and what he will do when Mr. Walpole comes to town. Where, by the way, he is mistaken; for it is the true English people of Ireland who refuse it, although we take it for granted, that the Irish will do so too whenever they are asked. In another printed paper of his contriving, it is roundly expressed, that Mr. Walpole will cram his brass down our throats. Sometimes it is given out, that we must either take those halfpence, or eat our brogues: and in another newsletter, but of yesterday, we read, that the same great man has sworn to make us swallow his coin in fireballs.

This brings to my mind the known story of a Scotchman, who receiving the sentence of death with all the circumstances of hanging, beheading, quartering, embowelling, and the like, cried out, What

What need all this COOKERY? And I think we have reason to ask the same question; for, if we believe Wood, here is a dinner getting ready for us; and you see the bill of fare; and I am sorry the drink was forgot, which might easily be supplied with melted lead and flaming pitch.

What vile words are these to put into the mouth of a great counsellor, in high trust with his majesty, and looked upon as a prime minister? If Mr. Wood has no better a manner of representing his patrons, when I come to be a great man, he shall never be suffered to attend at my levee. This is not the style of a great minister; it savours too much of the kettle and the furnace, and came entirely out of Wood's forge.

As for the threat of making us eat our brogues, we need not be in pain; for, if his coin should pass, that unpolite covering for the feet would no longer be a national reproach; because then we should have neither shoe nor brogue left in the kingdom. But here the falsehood of Mr. Wood is fairly detected; for I am confident Mr. Walpole never heard of a brogue in his whole life.

As to swallowing these halfpence in fireballs, it is a story equally improbable. For, to execute this operation, the whole stock of Mr. Wood's coin and metal must be melted down, and moulded into hollow balls with wildfire, no bigger than a reasonable throat may be able to swallow. Now, the metal he has prepared, and already coined, will amount to at least fifty millions of halfpence to be swallowed by a million and a half of people; so that, allowing two halfpence to each ball, there will be about seventeen balls of wildfire apiece to be swallowed by every

person in the kingdom; and to administer this dose, there cannot be conveniently fewer than fifty thousand operators, allowing one operator to every thirty; which, considering the squeamishness of some stomachs, and the peevishness of young children, is but reasonable. Now, under correction of better judgments, I think the trouble and charge of such an experiment, would exceed the profit; and therefore I take this report to be spurious, or, at least, only a new scheme of Mr. Wood himself; which, to make it pass the better in Ireland, he would father upon a minister of state.

But I will now demonstrate, beyond all contradiction, that Mr. Walpole is against this project of Mr. Wood, and is an entire friend to Ireland, only by this one invincible argument; that he has the universal opinion of being a wise man, an able minister, and in all his proceedings pursuing the true interest of the king his master: and that as his integrity is above all corruption, so is his fortune above all temptation. I reckon, therefore, we are perfectly safe from that corner, and shall never be under the necessity of contending with so formidable a power, but be left to possess our brogues and potatoes in peace, as remote from thunder as we are from Jupiter*.

I am, my dear countrymen,
your loving fellow subject,
fellow sufferer, and
humble servant,

OCTOBER 13, 1724. M. B.

* Procul à Jove, procul à fulmine.

Upon

Upon the arrival of lord Carteret, soon after the publication of this letter, a proclamation was published by his excellency and council, offering a reward of three hundred pounds for discovering the author. Harding the printer was imprisoned, and a bill of indictment was ordered to be prepared against him: which gave occasion to the following paper.

SEASONABLE

ADVICE

TO

THE GRAND JURY,

CONCERNING

THE BILL PREPARING AGAINST THE PRINTER OF THE DRAPIER'S FOURTH LETTER.

SINCE a bill is preparing for the grand jury to find against the printer of the drapier's last letter, there are several things maturely to be considered by those gentlemen before they determine upon it.

First, they are to consider, that the author of the said pamphlet did write three other discourses on the same subject, which, instead of being censured, were universally approved by the whole nation, and were allowed to have raised and continued that spirit among us, which has hitherto kept out Wood's coin; for all men will grant, that if those pamphlets had not been written, his coin must have overrun the nation some months ago.

Secondly, it is to be considered, that this pamphlet, against which a proclamation has been issued, is written by the same author: that nobody ever doubted

doubted the innocence and goodness of his design; that he appears, through the whole tenour of it, to be a loyal subject to his majesty, and devoted to the house of Hanover, and declares himself in a manner peculiarly zealous against the pretender. And if such a writer, in four several treatises on so nice a subject, where a royal patent is concerned, and where it was necessary to speak of England and of liberty, should in one or two places happen to let fall an inadvertent expression, it would be hard to condemn him after all the good he has done, especially when we consider, that he could have no possible design in view either of honour or profit, but purely the GOOD of his COUNTRY.

Thirdly, it ought to be well considered, whether any one expression in the said pamphlet be really liable to a just exception, much less to be found wicked, malicious, seditious, reflecting upon his majesty and his ministry, etc.

The two points in that pamphlet, which it is said the prosecutors intend chiefly to fix on, are, first, where the author mentions the penner of the king's answer. First, it is well known his majesty is not master of the English tongue; and therefore it is necessary that some other person should be employed to pen what he has to say, or write in that language. Secondly, his majesty's answer is not in the first person, but in the third. It is not said, WE ARE CONCERNED, OF OUR ROYAL PREDECESSORS; but HIS MAJESTY is CONCERNED, and HIS ROYAL PREDECESSORS. By which it is plain, these are properly not the words of his majesty; but supposed to be taken from him, and transmitted hither by one of his ministers. Thirdly, it will be easily seen, that

the author of the pamphlet delivers his sentiments upon this particular with the utmost caution and respect, as any impartial reader will observe.

The second paragraph, which it is said will be taken notice of as a motive to find the bill, is what the author says of Ireland's being a dependent kingdom: he explains all the dependence he knows of, which is a law made in Ireland, whereby it is enacted, that whoever is king of England shall be king of Ireland. Before this explanation be condemned, and the bill found upon it, it would be proper that some lawyers should fully inform the jury what other law there is, either statute or common, for this dependency; and if there be no law, there is no transgression.

The fourth thing very maturely to be considered by the jury, is, what influence their finding the bill may have upon the kingdom: the people in general find no fault in the drapier's last book, any more than in the three former; and therefore, when they hear it is condemned by a grand jury of Dublin, they will conclude it is done in favour of Wood's coin; they will think we of this town have changed our minds, and intend to take those halfpence, and therefore that it will be in vain for them to stand out: so that the question comes to this, Which will be of the worst consequence? to let pass one or two expressions, at the worst only unwary, in a book written for the publick service; or to leave a free open passage for Wood's brass to overrun us, by which we shall be undone for ever.

The fifth thing to be considered is, that the members of the grand jury, being merchants and principal shopkeepers, can have no suitable temptation offered them,

them, as a recompense for the mischief they will do, and suffer by letting in this coin; nor can be at any loss or danger by rejecting the bill. They do not expect any employments in the state, to make up in their own private advantages the destruction of their country; whereas those, who go about to advise, entice, or threaten them to find that bill, have great employments which they have a mind to keep, or to get greater; as it was likewise the case of all those who signed the proclamation to have the author prosecuted. And therefore it is known, that his grace the lord archbishop of Dublin, so renowned for his piety, and wisdom, and love of his country, absolutely refused to condemn the book or the author.

Lastly, it ought to be considered what consequence the finding of the bill may have upon a poor man, perfectly innocent; I mean the printer. A lawyer may pick out expressions, and make them liable to exception, where no other man is able to find any. But how can it be supposed that an ignorant printer can be such a critick? He knew the author's design was honest, and approved by the whole kingdom: he advised with friends, who told him there was no harm in the book, and he could see none himself: it was sent him in an unknown hand; but the same in which he received the three former. He and his wife have offered to take their oaths that they knew not the author. And therefore, to find a bill that may bring punishment upon the innocent, will appear very hard, to say no worse. For it will be impossible to find the author, unless he will please to discover himself; although I wonder he ever concealed his name: but I suppose what he did at first

out

out of modesty, he continues to do out of prudence. God protect us and him.

I will conclude all with a fable ascribed to Demosthenes: he had served the people of Athens with great fidelity in the station of an orator; when, upon a certain occasion, apprehending to be delivered over to his enemies, he told the Athenians, his countrymen, the following story: Once upon a time the wolves desired a league with the sheep, upon this condition; that the cause of strife might be taken away, which was the shepherds and mastiffs: this being granted, the wolves without all fear made havock of the sheep.

November 11, 1724.

Copies of this paper were distributed to every person of the grand jury the evening before the bill was to be exhibited, who, probably for the reasons contained in it, refused to find the bill, upon which the lord chief justice Whitshed, who had presided at a former prosecution of the dean's printer, discharged them in a rage. The following extract was soon after published to show the illegality of this proceeding, and the next grand jury that was impannelled made the subsequent presentment against all the abettors of Wood's project. See letter to lord Molesworth, p. 111 of this volume.

An extract from a book, entitled, An exact Collection of the Debate of the House of Commons, held at Westminster, Oct. 21, 1680, *page* 150.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN ENGLAND, NOV. 13, 1680.

SEVERAL persons being examined about the dismissing a grand jury in Middlesex, the house came to the following resolutions:

Resolved, that the discharging of a grand jury by any judge, before the end of the term, assises, or sessions, while matters are under their consideration, and not presented, is arbitrary, illegal, destructive to publick justice, a manifest violation of his oath, and is a means to subvert the fundamental laws of this kingdom.

Resolved, that a committee be appointed to examine the proceedings of the judges in Westminster-hall; and report the same, with their opinion herein, to this house.

THE

THE PRESENTMENT

OF THE GRAND JURY OF THE COUNTY OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN.

WHEREAS several great quantities of base metal coined, commonly called Wood's halfpence, have been brought into the port of Dublin, and lodged in several houses of this city, with an intention to make them pass clandestinely among his majesty's subjects of this kingdom; notwithstanding the addresses of both houses of parliament, and the privy council, and the declarations of most of the corporations of this city against the said coin: And whereas his majesty has been graciously pleased to leave his loyal subjects of this kingdom at liberty to take or refuse the said halfpence;

We the grand jury of the county of the city of Dublin, this Michaelmas term, 1724, having entirely at heart his majesty's interest, and the welfare of our country, and being thoroughly sensible of the great discouragements which trade hath suffered by the apprehensions of the said coin, whereof we have already felt the dismal effects; and that the currency thereof will inevitably tend to the great diminution of his majesty's revenue, and the ruin of us and our posterity, do present all such persons as have attempted, or shall endeavour by fraud, or otherwise, to impose the said halfpence upon us, contrary to his majesty's most gracious intentions, as enemies to his majesty's government,

government, and to the safety, peace, and welfare of all his majesty's subjects of this kingdom; whose affections have been so eminently distinguished by their zeal to his illustrious family, before his happy accession to the throne, and by their continued loyalty ever since.

As we do, with all just gratitude, acknowledge the services of all such patriots as have been eminently zealous for the interest of his majesty and this country, in detecting the fraudulent imposition of the said Wood, and preventing the passing of his base coin; so we do, at the same time, declare our abhorrence and detestation of all reflections on his majesty and his government; and that we are ready with our lives and fortunes to defend his most sacred majesty against the pretender, and all his majesty's open and secret enemies both at home and abroad.

Given under our hands at the grand jury chamber, this 28th of November, 1724.

George Forbes,
William Empson,
Nathaniel Pearson,
Joseph Nuttall,
William Aston,
Stearn Tighe,
Richard Walker,
Edmond French,
John Vereilles,
Philip Pearson,
Thomas Robins,
Richard Dawson,
David Tew,
Thomas How,
John Jones,
James Brown,
Charles Lyndon,
Jerom Bredin,
John Sican,
Anthony Brunton,
Thomas Gaven,
Daniel Elwood,
John Brunet.

A LETTER

A

LETTER

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE LORD VISCOUNT MOLESWORTH.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1724.

They compassed me about also with words of deceit, and fought against me without a cause.

For my love they are my adversaries; but I give myself unto prayer.

And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love. Psal. cix, 3, 4, 5.

Seek not to be judge, being not able to take away iniquity; lest at any time thou fear the person of the mighty, and lay a stumbling-block in the way of thy uprightness.

Offend not against the multitude of a city, and then thou shalt not cast thyself down among the people.

Bind not one sin upon another, for in one thou shalt not be unpunished. Eccl. vii, 6, 7, 8.

Nos jam prima peto Mnestheus, neque vincere certo:
Quanquam O! Sed superent, quibus hoc, Neptune, dedisti.

DIRECTIONS

DIRECTIONS

TO THE

PRINTER.

MR. HARDING,

WHEN I sent you my former papers, I cannot say I intended you either good or hurt; and yet you have happened through my means to receive both. I pray God deliver you from any more of the latter, and increase the former. Your trade, particularly in this kingdom, is, of all others, the most unfortunately circumstantiated; for as you deal in the most worthless kind of trash, the penny productions of pennyless scribblers; so you often venture your liberty, and sometimes your lives, for the purchase of half a crown; and, by your own ignorance, are punished for other men's actions.

I am afraid, you in particular think you have reason to complain of me, for your own and your wife's confinement in prison, to your great expense, as well as hardship; and for a prosecution still impending. But I will tell you, Mr. Harding, how that matter stands. Since the press has lain under so strict an inspection, those who have a mind to inform the world are become so cautious, as to keep themselves, if possible, out of the way of danger.

My custom therefore is to dictate to a prentice, who can write in a feigned hand; and what is written we send to your house by a black-guard boy. But, at the same time, I do assure you upon my reputation, that I never did send you any thing for which I thought you could possibly be called to an account. And you will be my witness, that I always desired you, by letter, to take some good advice before you ventured to print; because I knew the dexterity of dealers in the law, at finding out something to fasten on, where no evil is meant. I am told indeed, that you did accordingly consult several very able persons, and even some who afterward appeared against you: to which I can only answer; that you must either change your advisers, or determine to print nothing that comes from a drapier.

I desire you will send the enclosed letter directed to my lord viscount Molesworth, at his house at Brackdenstown, near Swords: but I would have it sent printed, for the convenience of his lordship's reading; because this counterfeit hand of my prentice is not very legible. And if you think fit to publish it, I would have you first get it read over by some notable lawyer: I am assured, you will find enough of them, who are friends to the drapier, and will do it without a fee; which I am afraid, you can ill afford, after all your expenses. For, although I have taken so much care, that I think it impossible to find a topick out of the following papers for sending you again to prison, yet I will not venture to be your guarantee.

This ensuing letter contains only a short account of myself, and an humble apology for my former pamphlets,

pamphlets, especially the last; with little mention of Mr. Wood, or his halfpence; because I have already said enough upon that subject, until occasion shall be given for new fears; and, in that case, you may perhaps hear from me again.

I am,
Your friend
and servant,

From my shop in St. Francis street, Dec. 14, 1724.

M. B.

P. S. For want of intercourse between you and me, which I never will suffer, your people are apt to make very gross errours in the press, which I desire you will provide against.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE LORD VISCOUNT MOLESWORTH,

AT HIS HOUSE AT BRACKDENSTOWN NEAR SWORDS.

MY LORD,

I REFLECT too late on the maxim of common observers, that those who meddle in matters out of their calling, will have reason to repent; which is now verified in me: for, by engaging in the trade of a writer, I have drawn upon myself the displeasure of the government, signified by a proclamation promising a reward of three hundred pounds to the first faithful subject, who shall be able and inclined to inform against me; to which I may add, the laudable zeal and industry of my lord chief justice Whitshed, in his endeavours to discover so dangerous a person. Therefore whether I repent or not, I have certainly cause to do so; and the common observation still stands good.

It will sometimes happen, I know not how, in the course of human affairs, that a man shall be made liable to legal animadversion, where he has nothing to answer for, either to God or his country; and condemned at Westminster hall, for what he will never be charged with at the day of judgment.

After

After strictly examining my own heart, and consulting some divines of great reputation, I cannot accuse myself of any malice or wickedness against the publick; of any designs to sow sedition; of reflecting on the king and his ministers; or of endeavouring to alienate the affections of the people of this kingdom from those of England *. All I can charge myself with, is a weak attempt to serve a nation in danger of destruction, by a most wicked and malicious projector, without waiting until I were called to its assistance. Which attempt, however it may perhaps give me the title of pragmatical and overweening, will never lie a burden upon my conscience. God knows whether I may not, with all my caution, have already run myself into a second danger, by offering thus much in my own vindication. For I have heard of a judge, who upon the criminal's appeal to the dreadful day of judgment, told him, he had incurred a premunire, for appealing to a foreign jurisdiction; and of another in Wales, who severely checked the prisoner for offering the same plea; taxing him with reflecting on the court by such a comparison; because comparisons were odious.

But, in order to make some excuse for being more speculative than others of my condition, I desire your lordship's pardon, while I am doing a very foolish thing; which is, to give you some little account of myself.

I was bred at a freeschool, where I acquired some little knowledge in the Latin tongue. I served my apprenticeship in London, and there

* Articles mentioned in the indictment and proclamation.

set up for myself with good success; until, by the death of some friends, and misfortunes of others, I returned into this kingdom; and began to employ my thoughts in cultivating the woollen manufacture through all its branches; wherein I met with great discouragement, and powerful opposers, whose objections appeared to me very strange and singular. They argued, that the people of England would be offended, if our manufactures were brought to equal theirs; and even some of the weaving trade were my enemies; which I could not but look upon as absurd and unnatural. I remember your lordship at that time did me the honour to come into my shop, where I showed you a piece of black and white stuff just sent from the dyer*; which you were pleased to approve of, and be my customer for.

However, I was so mortified, that I resolved for the future to sit quietly in my shop, and deal in common goods, like the rest of my brethren; until it happened some months ago, considering with myself, that the lower and poorer sort of people wanted a plain, strong coarse stuff to defend them against cold easterly winds, which then blew very fierce and blasting for a long time together; I contrived one on purpose, which sold very well all over the kingdom, and preserved many thousands from agues. I then made a second and a third kind of stuffs† for the gentry, with the same success; insomuch, that an ague has hardly been heard of for some time.

This incited me so far, that I ventured upon a

* By this is meant, the Proposal for the universal Use of Irish Manufactures.

† The drapier's first three letters.

fourth

fourth piece* made of the best Irish wool I could get; and I thought it grave and rich enough to be worn by the best lord or judge of the land. But of late some great folks complain, as I hear, that when they had it on, they felt a shuddering in their limbs, and have thrown it off in a rage; cursing to Hell the poor drapier, who invented it; so that I am determined never to work for persons of quality again; except for your lordship, and a very few more.

I assure your lordship, upon the word of an honest citizen, that I am not richer, by the value of one of Mr. Wood's halfpence, with the sale of all the several stuffs I have contrived: for, I give the whole profit to the dyers and pressers†. And therefore I hope you will please to believe, that no other motive, beside the love of my country, could engage me to busy my head and hands, to the loss of my time, and the gain of nothing but vexation and ill will.

I have now in hand one piece of stuff to be woven on purpose for your lordship; although I might be ashamed to offer it to you, after I have confessed that it will be made only from the shreds and remnants of the wool employed in the former. However I shall work it up as well as I can; and at worst, you need only give it among your tenants.

I am very sensible, how ill your lordship is likely to be entertained, with the pedantry of a drapier in the terms of his own trade. How will the matter be mended, when you find me entering again, although very sparingly, into an affair of state? for such is now grown the controversy with Mr. Wood, if some

* The fourth letter, against which the proclamation was issued.
† Printers.

great lawyers are to be credited. And as it often happens at play, that men begin with farthings, and go on to gold, till some of them lose their estates and die in jail; so it may possibly fall out in my case, that by playing too long with Mr. Wood's halfpence, I may be drawn in to pay a fine double to the reward for betraying me; be sent to prison, and not be delivered thence until I shall have paid the uttermost farthing.

There are, my lord, three sorts of persons, with whom I am resolved never to dispute; a highwayman with a pistol at my breast; a troop of dragoons, who come to plunder my house; and a man of the law, who can make a merit of accusing me. In each of these cases, which are almost the same, the best method is to keep out of the way; and the next best is, to deliver your money, surrender your house, and confess nothing.

I am told, that the two points in my last letter, from which an occasion of offence has been taken, are, where I mention his majesty's answer to the address of the house of lords upon Mr. Wood's patent; and where I discourse upon Ireland's being a dependent kingdom. As to the former, I can only say, that I have treated it with the utmost respect and caution; and I thought it necessary to show where Wood's patent differed in many essential parts from all others that ever had been granted; because the contrary had, for want of due information, been so strongly and so largely asserted. As to the other, of Ireland's dependency; I confessed to have often heard it mentioned, but was never able to understand what it meant. This gave me the curiosity to inquire among several eminent lawyers, who professed they knew

[redacted]

Some hundred years ago, when the lords were so great that the commons were looked upon as little better than their dependents, a bill was brought in for making some new additions to the power and privileges of the peerage. After it was read, one Mr. Dyne, a member of the house, stood up and said, he very much approved the bill, and would give his vote to have it pass: but however, for some reasons best known to himself, he desired that a clause might be inserted for excepting the family of the Dynes. The oddness of the proposition caught others to reflect a little; and the bill was thrown out.

Whether I were mistaken, or went too far in examining the dependency, must be left to the impartial judgment of the world, as well as to the courts of judicature; although indeed not in so effectual and decisive

decisive a manner. But to affirm, as I hear some do, in order to countenance a fearful and servile spirit, that this point did not belong to my subject, is a false and foolish objection. There were several scandalous reports industriously spread by Wood and his accomplices, to discourage all opposition against his infamous project. They gave it out, that we were prepared for a rebellion; that we disputed the king's prerogative, and were shaking off our dependency. The first went so far, and obtained so much belief against the most visible demonstrations to the contrary, that a great person of this kingdom, now in England, sent over such an account of it to his friends, as would make any good subject both grieve and tremble. I thought it therefore necessary to treat that calumny as it deserved. Then I proved by an invincible argument, that we could have no intention to dispute his majesty's prerogative; because the prerogative was not concerned in the question; the civilians and lawyers of all nations agreeing that copper is not money. And lastly, to clear us from the imputation of shaking off our dependency, I showed wherein I thought and shall ever think this dependence consisted; and cited the statute abovementioned made in Ireland; by which it is enacted, that whoever is king of England, shall be king of Ireland; and that the two kingdoms shall be for ever knit together under one king. This, as I conceived, did wholly acquit us of intending to break our dependency; because it was altogether out of our power: for surely no king of England will ever consent to the repeal of this statute.

But upon this article I am charged with a heavier accusation. It is said I went too far, when I declared, that

that if ever the pretender should come to be fixed upon the throne of England (which God forbid) I would so far venture to transgress this statute, that I would lose the last drop of my blood, before I would submit to him as king of Ireland.

This I hear, on all sides, is the strongest and weightiest objection against me; and which has given the most offence; that I should be so bold to declare against a direct statute; and that any motive, how strong soever, could make me reject a king, whom England should receive. Now, if in defending myself from this accusation I should freely confess, that I went too far; that the expression was very indiscreet, although occasioned by my zeal for his present majesty, and his protestant line in the house of Hanover; that I shall be careful never to offend again in the like kind; and that I hope this free acknowledgment, and sorrow for my errour, will be some atonement, and a little soften the hearts of my powerful adversaries: I say, if I should offer such a defence as this, I do not doubt but some people would wrest it to an ill meaning, by a spiteful interpretation. And therefore, since I cannot think of any other answer, which that paragraph can admit, I will leave it to the mercy of every candid reader; but still without recanting my own opinion.

I will now venture to tell your lordship a secret, wherein I fear you are too deeply concerned. You will therefore please to know, that this habit of writing and discoursing, wherein I unfortunately differ from almost the whole kingdom, and am apt to grate the ears of more than I could wish, was acquired during my apprenticeship in London, and a long residence there after I had set up for myself. Upon

Upon my return and settlement here, I thought I had only changed one country of freedom for another. I had been long conversing with the writings of your lordship *, Mr. Locke, Mr. Molineux, colonel Sidney, and other dangerous authors, who talk of liberty as a blessing, to which the whole race of mankind has an original title; whereof nothing but unlawful force can divest them. I knew a great deal of the several Gothick institutions in Europe; and by what incidents and events they came to be destroyed: and I ever thought it the most uncontrolled and universally agreed maxim, that freedom consists in a people's being governed by laws made with their own consent; and slavery, in the contrary. I have been likewise told, and believed it to be true, that liberty and property are words of known use and signification in this kingdom; and the very lawyers pretend to understand and have them often in their mouths. These were the errours, which have misled me; and to which alone I must impute the severe treatment I have received. But I shall in time grow wiser, and learn to consider my driver, and the road I am in, and with whom I am yoked. This I will venture to say; that the boldest and most obnoxious words I ever delivered, would, in England, have only exposed me as a stupid fool, who went to prove that the sun shone in a clear summer's day: and I have witnesses ready to depose, that your lordship has said and writ fifty times worse; and what is still an aggravation, with infinitely more wit and learning, and stronger arguments: so that as politicks run, I

* He published a book in the reign of king William III, entitled the State of Denmark, with a large preface.

do

do not know a person of more exceptionable principles than yourself: and if ever I shall be discovered, I think you will be bound in honour to pay my fine, and support me in prison; or else I may chance to inform against you by way of reprisal.

In the mean time I beg your lordship to receive my confession; that if there be any such thing as a dependency of Ireland upon England, otherwise than as I have explained it, either by the law of God, of nature, of reason, of nations, or of the land (which I shall die rather than grant) then was the proclamation against me the most merciful that ever was put out; and instead of accusing me as malicious, wicked, and seditious, it might have been directly as guilty of high treason.

All I desire is, that the cause of my country against Mr. Wood may not suffer by any inadvertency of mine. Whether Ireland depends upon England, or only upon God, the king, and the law; I hope no man will assert, that it depends upon Mr. Wood. I should be heartily sorry that this commendable spirit against me should accidentally (and what I hope, was never intended) strike a damp upon that spirit in all ranks and corporations of men against the desperate and ruinous design of Mr. Wood. Let my countrymen blot out those parts in my last letter, which they dislike; and let no rust remain on my sword, to cure the wounds I have given to our most mortal enemy. When sir Charles Sedley was taking the oaths, where several things were to be renounced, he said, he loved renouncing; asked if any more were to be renounced; for he was ready to renounce as much as they pleased. Although I am not so thorough a renouncer, yet let me have but good city security

security against this pestilent coinage, and I shall be ready not only to renounce every syllable in all my four letters, but to deliver them cheerfully with my own hands into those of the common hangman, to be burnt with no better company than the coiner's effigies, if any part of it has escaped out of the secular hands of my faithful friends, the common people*.

But, whatever the sentiments of some people may be, I think it is agreed that many of those who subscribed against me, are on the side of a vast majority in the kingdom, who opposed Mr. Wood: and it was with great satisfaction, that I observed some right honourable names very amicably joined with my own, at the bottom of a strong declaration against him and his coin. But if the admission of it among us be already determined, the worthy person, who is to betray me, ought in prudence to do it with all convenient speed; or else it may be difficult to find three hundred pounds sterling for the discharge of his hire, when the publick shall have lost five hundred thousand, if there be so much in the nation; beside four fifths of its annual income for ever.

I am told by lawyers, that in quarrels between man and man, it is of much weight, which of them gave the first provocation, or struck the first blow. It is manifest that Mr. Wood has done both: and therefore I should humbly propose to have him first hanged, and his dross thrown into the sea: after which, the drapier will be ready to stand his trial. It must needs be that offences come, but woe unto him

* This passage is cited by Dr. Campbell, in his "Philosophy of "Rhetorick," as a very strong example of commendation, couched with great delicacy under an air of reproach.

by

by whom the offence comes. If Mr. Wood had held his hand, every body else would have held their tongues: and then there would have been little need of pamphlets, juries, or proclamations upon this occasion. The provocation must needs have been very great, which could stir up an obscure, indolent drapier, to become an author. One would almost think, the very stones in the street would rise up in such a cause: and I am not sure they will not do so against Mr. Wood, if ever he comes within their reach. It is a known story of the dumb boy, whose tongue forced a passage for speech by the horrour of seeing a dagger at his father's throat. This may lessen the wonder, that a tradesman, hid in privacy and silence, should cry out, when the life and being of his political mother are attempted before his face, and by so infamous a wretch.

But in the mean time Mr. Wood, the destroyer of a kingdom, walks about in triumph (unless it be true, that he is in jail for debt) while he, who endeavoured to assert the liberty of his country, is forced to hide his head for occasionally dealing in a matter of controversy. However, I am not the first who has been condemned to death, for gaining a great victory over a powerful enemy, by disobeying for once the strict orders of military discipline.

I am now resolved to follow (after the usual proceeding of mankind, because it is too late) the advice given me by a certain dean*. He showed the mistake I was in, of trusting to the general good will of the people; that I had succeeded hitherto better than could be expected; but that some unfortunate cir-

* The author is supposed to mean himself.

cumstantial

cumstantial lapse would bring me within the reach of power: that my good intentions would be no security against those who watched every motion of my pen in the bitterness of my soul. He produced an instance of a person as innocent, as disinterested, and as well-meaning as myself; who had written a very seasonable and inoffensive treatise, exhorting the people of this kingdom to wear their own manufactures*; for which, however, the printer was prosecuted with the utmost virulence; the jury sent back nine times; and the man given up to the mercy of the court. The dean farther observed, that I was in a manner left alone to stand the battle; while others who had ten thousand times better talents than a drapier, were so prudent as to lie still; and perhaps thought it no unpleasant amusement to look on with safety, while another was giving them diversion at the hazard of his liberty and fortune; and thought they made a sufficient recompense by a little applause: whereupon he concluded with a short story of a Jew at Madrid; who being condemned to the fire on account of his religion, a crowd of schoolboys following him to the stake, and apprehending they might lose their sport if he should happen to recant, would often clap him on the back, and cry, *Sta firme, Moyse;* Moses, continue stedfast.

I allow this gentleman's advice to have been very good, and his observations just; and in one respect, my condition is worse than that of the Jew; for no recantation will save me. However, it should seem by some late proceedings, that my state is not alto-

* The author means himself again; in the discourse advising the people of Ireland to wear their own manufactures.

gether

gether deplorable. This I can impute to nothing but the steadiness of two impartial grand juries; which has confirmed in me an opinion I have long entertained; that, as philosophers say, virtue is seated in the middle; so, in another sense, the little virtue left in the world, is chiefly to be found among the middle rank of mankind, who are neither allured out of her paths by ambition, nor driven by poverty.

Since the proclamation occasioned by my last letter, and a due preparation for proceeding against me in a court of justice, there have been two printed papers clandestinely spread about; whereof no man is able to trace the original, farther than by conjecture; which, with its usual charity, lays them to my account. The former, is entitled, Seasonable Advice, and appears to have been intended for information of the grand jury, upon the supposition of a bill to be prepared against that letter. The other, is an extract from a printed book of parliamentary proceedings, in the year 1680; containing an angry resolution of the house of commons in England, against dissolving grand juries. As to the former, your lordship will find it to be the work of a more artful hand than that of a common drapier. It has been censured for endeavouring to influence the minds of a jury, which ought to be wholly free and unbiassed; and for that reason it is manifest, that no judge was ever known, either upon, or off the bench, either by himself, or his dependents, to use the least insinuation, that might possibly affect the passions or interests of any one single juryman, much less of a whole jury; whereof every man must be convinced, who will just give himself the trouble to dip into the common printed trials: so as it is amazing to think,

what a number of upright judges there have been in both kingdoms, for above sixty years past; which, considering how long they held their offices during pleasure, as they still do among us, I account next to a miracle.

As to the other paper, I must confess it is a sharp censure from an English house of commons against dissolving grand juries, by any judge before the end of the term, assizes, or sessions, while matters are under their consideration, and not presented; as arbitrary, illegal, destructive to publick justice, a manifest violation of his oath, and as a means to subvert the fundamental laws of the kingdom.

However, the publisher seems to have been mistaken in what he aimed at. For whatever dependence there may be of Ireland upon England, I hope he would not insinuate, that the proceedings of a lord chief justice in Ireland, must depend upon a resolution of an English house of commons. Besides, that resolution, although it were levelled against a particular lord chief justice, sir William Scroggs, yet the occasion was directly contrary. For Scroggs dissolved the grand jury of London for fear they should present; but ours in Dublin was dissolved, because they would not present; which wonderfully alters the case. And therefore a second grand jury supplied that defect, by making a presentment* that pleased the whole kingdom. However, I think it is agreed by all parties, that both the one and the other jury, behaved themselves in such a manner, as ought to be remembered to their honour, while there shall be any regard left among us for virtue or publick spirit.

* See the presentment immediately preceding this letter.

I am

I am confident, your lordship will be of my sentiments in one thing; that some short plain authentick tract might be published for the information both of petty and grand juries, how far their power reaches, and where it is limited; and that a printed copy of such a treatise might be deposited in every court, to be consulted by the jurymen, before they consider of their verdict; by which, abundance of inconveniences would be avoided, whereof innumerable instances might be produced from former times; because I will say nothing of the present.

I have read somewhere of an eastern king, who put a judge to death for an iniquitous sentence, and ordered his hide to be stuffed into a cushion, and placed upon the tribunal for the son to sit on, who was preferred to his father's office. I fancy, such a memorial might not have been unuseful to a son of sir William Scroggs, and that both he and his successors would often wriggle in their seats, as long as the cushion lasted: I wish the relator had told us what number of such cushions there might be in that country.

I cannot but observe to your lordship, how nice and dangerous a point it is grown, for a private person to inform the people even in an affair where the publick interest and safety are so highly concerned, as that of Mr. Wood; and this in a country where loyalty is woven into the very hearts of the people, seems a little extraordinary. Sir William Scroggs was the first who introduced that commendable acuteness into the courts of judicature; but how far this practice has been imitated by his successors, or strained upon occasion, is out of my knowledge. When pamphlets unpleasing to the ministry were

presented as libels, he would order the offensive paragraphs to be read before him; and he was often so very happy in applying the initial letters of names, and expounding dubious hints (the two common expedients among writers of that class for escaping the law) that he discovered much more than ever the authors intended; as many of them, or their printers, found to their cost. If such methods are to be followed in examining what I have already written, or may write hereafter, upon the subject of Mr. Wood, I defy any man of fifty times my understanding and caution to avoid being entrapped: unless he will be content to write what none will read, by repeating over the old arguments and computations, whereof the world is already grown weary. So that my good friend Harding lies under this dilemma; either to let my learned works hang for ever drying upon his lines; or venture to publish them at the hazard of being laid by the heels.

I need not tell your lordship where the difficulty lies: it is true, that the king and the laws permit us to refuse this coin of Mr. Wood; but at the same time it is equally true, that the king and the laws permit us to receive it. Now, it is barely possible, that the ministers in England, may not suppose the consequences of uttering that brass among us, to be so ruinous as we apprehend; because perhaps if they understood it in that light, they would in common humanity, use their credit with his majesty for saving a most loyal kingdom from destruction. But, as long as it shall please those great persons to think that coin will not be so very pernicious to us, we lie under the disadvantage of being censured as obstinate in not complying with a royal patent. Therefore nothing

nothing remains but to make use of that liberty, which the king and the laws have left us, by continuing to refuse this coin; and by frequent remembrances to keep up that spirit raised against it, which otherwise may be apt to flag, and perhaps in time to sink altogether. For, any publick order against receiving or uttering Mr. Wood's halfpence, is not reasonably to be expected in this kingdom, without directions from England; which I think no body presumes, or is so sanguine as to hope.

But to confess the truth, my lord, I begin to grow weary of my office as a writer; and could heartily wish it were devolved upon my brethren, the makers of songs and ballads, who perhaps are the best qualified at present to gather up the gleanings of this controversy. As to myself, it has been my misfortune to begin, and pursue it, upon a wrong foundation. For, having detected the frauds and falshoods of this vile impostor Wood in every part, I foolishly disdained to have recourse to whining, lamenting, and crying for mercy; but rather chose to appeal to law and liberty, and the common rights of mankind, without considering the climate I was in.

Since your last residence in Ireland, I frequently have taken my nag to ride about your grounds; where I fancied myself to feel an air of freedom breathing round me; and I am glad the low condition of a tradesman did not qualify me to wait on you at your house; for then, I am afraid, my writings would not have escaped severer censures. But I have lately sold my nag, and honestly told his greatest fault, which was that of snuffing up the air about Brackdenstown; whereby he became such a lover of liberty, that I could scarce hold him in.

I have likewise buried at the bottom of a strong chest your lordship's writings under a heap of others, that treat of liberty; and spread over a layer or two of Hobbes, Filmer, Bodin, and many more authors of that stamp, to be readiest at hand, whenever I shall be disposed to take up a new set of principles in government. In the mean time I design quietly to look to my shop, and keep as far out of your lordship's influence as possible: and if you ever see any more of my writings on this subject, I promise you shall find them as innocent, as insipid, and without a sting, as what I have now offered you. But, if your lordship will please to give me an easy lease of some part of your estate in Yorkshire, thither will I carry my chest: and turning it upside down, resume my political reading where I left off; feed on plain homely fair, and live and die a free honest English farmer; but not without regret for leaving my countrymen under the dread of the brazen talons of Mr. Wood: my most loyal and innocent countrymen; to whom I owe so much for their good opinion of me, and my poor endeavours to serve them. I am, with the greatest respect,

My lord,

Your lordship's most obedient

and most humble servant,

From my shop in St. Francis street, Dec. 14, 1724.

M. B.

These papers (for the sixth and seventh letters were not published till long afterward) prevailed, notwithstanding threats, prosecutions, and imprisonment, against all the influence of power, and all the artifices of cunning: persons of every sect united with the drapier in the common cause, his health was a perpetual toast, and his effigies were displayed in every street; Wood was compelled to withdraw his patent, and his halfpence were totally suppressed.

BY

BY many passages in the following letter, and by the date, October 6, 1724, it appears to have been written soon after the proclamation against the drapier for his fourth letter, and before the jury had thrown out the bill of indictment. At this crisis perhaps the dean did not choose to resume a character which was become obnoxious, and therefore wrote in his own: the original was signed with his name, though it appeared to have been obliterated by another hand; for some reason the publication of it was delayed, and it was first printed in an edition of the dean's works published at Dublin in 1735. This however is not the only reason why it is placed after the fifth letter, for the fifth letter appears to have been substituted in its stead, and not intended to follow it. The fourth letter, both in this and in the fifth is called the last, which could not have happened if both had been parts of the same series.

The reader will now easily account for those passages in the sixth by which the prosecution against Harding appears to be depending, though in the fifth it is mentioned as past*.

* This advertisement is an epitome of the preface to the Irish edition of the Drapier's Sixth Letter.

A

LETTER

TO THE

LORD CHANCELLOR MIDDLETON*.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1724.

MY LORD,

I DESIRE you will consider me as a member, who comes in at the latter end of a debate; or as a lawyer, who speaks to a cause when the matter has been almost exhausted by those who spoke before.

I remember, some months ago, I was at your house upon a commission, where I am one of the governors; but I went thither, not so much on account of the commission, as to ask you some questions concerning Mr. Wood's patent to coin halfpence for Ireland; where you very freely told me in a mixt company, how much you had been always against that wicked project; which raised in me an esteem for you so far, that I went in a few days to make you a visit, after many years intermission. I am likewise told, that your son wrote two letters from London (one of which I have seen) empowering those,

* He signed the proclamation against the Drapier.

to

to whom they were directed, to assure his friends, that whereas there was a malicious report spread of his engaging himself to Mr. Walpole for forty thousand pounds of Wood's coin to be received in Ireland, the said report was false and groundless; and he had never discoursed with that minister on this subject, nor would ever give his consent to have one farthing of the said coin current here. And although it be long since I have given myself the trouble of conversing with people of titles or stations; yet I have been told by those who can take up with such amusements, that there is not a considerable person of the kingdom scrupulous in any sort to declare his opinion. But all this is needless to allege, when we consider, that the ruinous consequences of Wood's patent have been so strongly represented by both houses of parliament; by the privy council; the lord mayor and aldermen of Dublin; by so many corporations; and the concurrence of the principal gentlemen in most counties at their quarter sessions, without any regard to party, religion, or nation.

I conclude from hence, that the currency of these halfpence, would, in the universal opinion of our people, be utterly destructive to this kingdom; and consequently that it is every man's duty not only to refuse this coin himself, but as far as in him lies, to persuade others to do the like: and whether this be done in private or in print, is all a case; as no layman is forbidden to write, or to discourse upon religious or moral subjects, although he may not do it in a pulpit, at least in our church. Neither is this an affair of state, until authority shall think fit to declare it so: or if you should understand it in that sense, yet

yet you will please to consider, that I am not now preaching.

Therefore I do think it my duty, since the drapier will probably be no more heard of, so far to supply his place, as not to incur his fortune: for I have learnt from old experience, that there are times, wherein a man ought to be cautious, as well as innocent. I therefore hope, that, preserving both those characters, I may be allowed, by offering new arguments, or enforcing old ones, to refresh the memory of my fellow-subjects, and keep up that good spirit raised among them, to preserve themselves from utter ruin by lawful means, and such as are permitted by his majesty.

I believe you will please to allow me two propositions: first, that we are a most loyal people; and secondly, that we are a free people, in the common acceptation of that word, applied to a subject under a limited monarch. I know very well, that you and I, did, many years ago, in discourse differ much, in the presence of lord Wharton, about the meaning of that word liberty, with relation to Ireland. But, if you will not allow us to be a free people, there is only another appellation left, which I doubt, my lord chief justice Whitshed would call me to account for, if I venture to bestow: for I observed (and I shall never forget upon what occasion) the device upon his coach to be, *libertas & natale solum*, at the very point of time when he was sitting in his court, and perjuring himself to betray both.

Now, as for our loyalty to his present majesty, if it has ever been equalled in any other part of his dominions, I am sure it has never been exceeded: and I am confident he has not a minister in England, who

who could ever call it once in question: but that some hard rumours at least have been transmitted from the other side of the water, I suppose you will not doubt: and rumours of the severest kind; which many good people have imputed to the indirect proceeding of Mr. Wood and his emissaries: as if he endeavoured it should be thought, that our loyalty depended upon the test of refusing or taking his copper. Now, as I am sure you will admit us to be a loyal people, so you will think it pardonable in us to hope for all proper marks of favour and protection from so gracious a king, that a loyal and free people can expect: among which, we all agree in reckoning this to be one; that Wood's halfpence may never have entrance into this kingdom. And this we shall continue to wish, when we dare no longer express our wishes; although there were no such mortal as a drapier in the world.

I am heartily sorry, that any writer should, in a cause so generally approved, give occasion to the government and council to charge him with paragraphs "highly reflecting upon his majesty and his mini-"sters; tending to alienate the affections of his good "subjects in England and Ireland from each other; "and to promote sedition among the people." I must confess that with many others, I thought he meant well; although he might have the failing of better writers, not to be always fortunate in the manner of expressing himself.

However, since the drapier is but one man, I shall think I do a publick service by asserting, that the rest of my countrymen are wholly free from learning out of his pamphlets to reflect on the king or his ministers, and to breed sedition.

I solemnly

I solemnly declare, that I never once heard the least reflection cast upon the king, on the subject of Mr. Wood's coin: for in many discourses on this matter, I do not remember his majesty's name to be so much as mentioned. As to the ministry in England, the only two persons hinted at, were, the duke of Grafton and Mr. Walpole: the former, as I have heard you and a hundred others affirm, declared that he never saw the patent in favour of Mr. Wood, before it was passed, although he was then lord lieutenant: and therefore I suppose every body believes that his grace has been wholly unconcerned in it ever since.

Mr. Walpole was indeed supposed to be understood by the letter W. in several newspapers; where it is said that some expressions fell from him not very favourable to the people of Ireland; for the truth of which the kingdom is not to answer, any more than for the discretion of the publishers. You observe, the drapier wholly clears Mr. Walpole of this charge by very strong arguments; and speaks of him with civility. I cannot deny myself to have been often present, where the company gave their opinion that Mr. Walpole favoured Mr. Wood's projects, which I always contradicted; and for my own part never once opened my lips against that minister, either in mixed or particular meetings: and my reason for this reservedness was; because it pleased him in the queen's time (I mean queen Anne of ever blessed memory) to make a speech directly against me by name, in the house of commons, as I was told a very few minutes after, in the court of requests, by more than fifty members.

But you, who are in a great station here (if any thing

thing here may be called great) cannot be ignorant, that whoever is understood by publick voice to be chief minister, will, among the general talkers, share the blame, whether justly or not, of every thing that is disliked; which I could easily make appear in many instances from my own knowledge, while I was in the world; and particularly in the case of the greatest, the wisest, and the most uncorrupt minister I ever conversed with*.

But whatever unpleasing opinion some people might conceive of Mr. Walpole, on account of those halfpence, I dare boldly affirm it was entirely owing to Mr. Wood. Many persons of credit come from England, have affirmed to me and others, that they have seen letters under his hand, full of arrogance and insolence toward Ireland, and boasting of his favour with Mr. Walpole; which is highly probable; because he reasonably thought it for his interest to spread such a report, and because it is the known talent of low and little spirits, to have a great man's name perpetually in their mouths.

Thus I have sufficiently justified the people of Ireland from learning any bad lesson out of the drapier's pamphlets, with regard to his majesty and his ministers: and therefore, if those papers were intended to sow sedition among us, God be thanked the seeds have fallen upon a very improper soil.

As to alienating the affections of the people of England and Ireland from each other; I believe the drapier, whatever his intentions were, has left that matter just as he found it.

I have lived long in both kingdoms, as well in

* Supposed to be the lord treasurer Oxford.

country

country as in town; and therefore take myself to be as well informed, as most men, in the dispositions of each people toward the other. By the people I understand here, only the bulk of the common people; and I desire no lawyer may distort or extend my meaning.

There is a vein of industry and parsimony, that runs through the whole people of England, which, added to the easiness of their rents, makes them rich and sturdy. As to Ireland, they know little more of it than they do of Mexico: farther than that it is a country subject to the king of England, full of bogs, inhabited by wild Irish papists, who are kept in awe by mercenary troops sent from thence: and their general opinion is, that it were better for England if this whole island were sunk into the sea: for they have a tradition, that every forty years there must be a rebellion in Ireland. I have seen the grossest suppositions passed upon them: that the wild Irish were taken in toils; but that in some time they would grow so tame as to eat out of your hands: I have been asked by hundreds, and particularly by my neighbours your tenants at Pepper-hara, whether I had come from Ireland by sea: and, upon the arrival of an Irishman to a country town, I have known crowds coming about him, and wondering to see him look so much better than themselves.

A gentleman now in Dublin affirms, that, passing some months ago through Northampton, and finding the whole town in a flurry, with bells, bonfires, and illuminations; upon asking the cause, he was told, that it was for joy that the Irish had submitted to receive Wood's halfpence. This, I think, plainly shows what sentiments that large town has of us; and how little

little they made it their own case; although they lie directly in our way to London, and therefore cannot but be frequently convinced that we have human shapes.

As to the people of this kingdom, they consist either of Irish papists, who are as inconsiderable, in point of power, as the women and children; or of English protestants, who love their brethren of that kingdom, although they may possibly sometimes complain when they think they are hardly used: however, I confess, I do not see that it is of any great consequence, how their personal affections stand to each other, while the sea divides them, and while they continue in their loyalty to the same prince. And yet I will appeal to you, whether those from England have reason to complain, when they come hither in pursuit of their fortunes? or, whether the people of Ireland have reason to boast, when they go to England upon the same design?

My second proposition was, that we of Ireland are a free people: this, I suppose, you will allow, at least with certain limitations remaining in your own breast. However, I am sure it is not criminal to affirm it; because the words liberty and property, as applied to the subject, are often mentioned in both houses of parliament, as well as in yours and other courts below: whence it must follow that the people of Ireland do, or ought to enjoy all the benefits of the common and statute law; such as to be tried by juries, to pay no money without their own consent as represented in parliament, and the like. If this be so, and if it be universally agreed that a free people cannot by law be compelled to take any money in payment, except gold and silver;

I do

I do not see why any man should be hindered from cautioning his countrymen against this coin of William Wood: who is endeavouring by fraud to rob us of that property, which the laws have secured. If I am mistaken, and this copper can be obtruded on us, I would put the drapier's case in another light, by supposing that a person going into his shop should agree for thirty shillings worth of goods, and force the seller to take his payment in a parcel of copper pieces intrinsically not worth above a crown: I desire to know whether the drapier would not be actually robbed of five and twenty shillings; and how far he could be said to be master of his property? The same question may be applied to rents and debts on bond or mortgage, and to all kind of commerce, whatsoever.

Give me leave to do, what the drapier has done more than once before me, which is, to relate the naked fact, as it stands in the view of the world.

One William Wood, esq. a hardwareman, obtains by fraud a patent in England to coin 108000l. in copper, to pass in Ireland, leaving us liberty to take or to refuse. The people here, in all sorts of bodies and representatives, do openly and heartily declare, that they will not accept this coin: to justify these declarations, they generally offer two reasons; first, because by the words of the patent they are left to their own choice; and secondly, because they are not obliged by law: so that you see there is, *bellum atque vicum*, a kingdom on one side, and William Wood on the other. And if Mr. Wood gets the victory at the expense of Ireland's ruin, and the profit of one or two hundred thousand pounds (I mean by continuing, and counterfeiting as long

as he lives) for himself; I doubt, both present and future ages will at least think it a very singular scheme.

If this fact be truly stated, I must confess, I look upon it as my duty, so far as God has enabled me, and as long as I keep within the bounds of truth, of duty, and of decency, to warn my fellow subjects, as they value their king, their country, and all that ought or can be dear to them, never to admit this pernicious coin; no not so much as one single halfpenny. For if one single thief forces the door, it is in vain to talk of keeping out the whole crew behind.

And while I shall be thus employed, I will never give myself leave to suppose, that what I say can either offend my lord lieutenant, whose person and great qualities I have always highly respected, (as I am sure his excellency will be my witness) or the ministers in England, with whom I have nothing to do, or they with me; much less the privy council here; who, as I am informed, did send an address to his majesty against Mr. Wood's coin; which if it be a mistake, I desire I may not be accused for a spreader of false news: but I confess, I am so great a stranger to affairs, that, for any thing I know, the whole body of the council may since have been changed: and although I observe some of the very same names in a late declaration against that coin, which I saw subscribed to the proclamation against the drapier, yet possibly they may be different persons: for they are utterly unknown to me, and are likely to continue so.

In this controversy, where the reasoners on each side are divided by St. George's channel, his majesty's

jesty's prerogative perhaps would not have been mentioned, if Mr. Wood and his advocates had not made it necessary, by giving out that the currency of his coin should be enforced by a proclamation. The traders and common people of the kingdom were heartily willing to refuse this coin; but the fear of a proclamation brought along with it most dreadful apprehensions. It was therefore absolutely necessary for the drapier to remove this difficulty; and accordingly, in one of his former pamphlets, he produced invincible arguments (wherever he picked them up) that the king's prerogative was not at all concerned in the matter; since the law had sufficiently provided against any coin to be imposed on the subject, except gold and silver; and that copper is not money, but, as it has been properly called, *nummorum famulus*.

The three former letters from the drapier having not received any publick censure, I look upon them to be without exception; and that the good people of the kingdom ought to read them often, in order to keep up that spirit raised against this destructive coin of Mr. Wood: as for this last letter, against which a proclamation is issued; I shall only say, that I could wish it were stripped of all that can be any way exceptionable; which I would not think it below me to undertake, if my abilities were equal; but, being naturally somewhat slow of comprehension, no lawyer, and apt to believe the best of those, who profess good designs, without any visible motive either of profit or honour; I might pore for ever, without distinguishing the cockle from the corn.

That which I am told gives the greatest offence

in this last letter, is, where the drapier affirms, that, if a rebellion should prove so successful as to fix the pretender on the throne of England, he would venture so far to transgress the Irish statute, which unites Ireland to England under one king, as to lose every drop of his blood to hinder him from being king of Ireland.

I shall not presume to vindicate any man, who openly delares he would transgress a statute; and a statute of such importance: but, with the most humble submission and desire of pardon for a very innocent mistake, I should be apt to think, that the loyal intention of the writer, might be at least some small extenuation of his crime; for in this I confess myself to think with the drapier.

I have not been hitherto told of any other objections against that pamphlet; but I suppose, they will all appear at the prosecution of the drapier. And I think, whoever in his own conscience believes the said pamphlet to be wicked and malicious, seditious and scandalous, highly reflecting upon his majesty and his ministers, &c. would do well to discover the author (as little a friend as I am to the trade of informers) although the reward of 300l. had not been tacked to the discovery. I own, it would be a great satisfaction to me to hear the arguments not only of judges, but of lawyers upon this case. Because you cannot but know, there often happen occasions, wherein it would be very convenient that the bulk of the people should be informed how they ought to conduct themselves; and therefore it has been the wisdom of the English parliaments to be very reserved in limiting the press. When a bill is debating in either house of parliament there, nothing

is

is more usual, than to have the controversy handled by pamphlets on both sides, without the least animadversion upon the authors.

So here, in the case of Mr. Wood and his coin; since the two houses gave their opinion by addresses, how dangerous the currency of that copper would be to Ireland, it was, without all question, both lawful and convenient, that the bulk of the people should be let more particularly into the nature of the danger they were in, and of the remedies that were in their own power, if they would have the sense to apply them; and this cannot be more conveniently done, than by particular persons, to whom God has given zeal and understanding sufficient for such an undertaking. Thus it happened in the case of that destructive project for a bank in Ireland, which was brought into parliament a few years ago; and it was allowed, that the arguments and writings of some without doors, contributed very much to reject it.

Now I should be heartily glad, if some able lawyers would prescribe the limits, how far a private man may venture in delivering his thoughts upon publick matters: because a true lover of his country, may think it hard to be a quiet stander by, and an indolent looker on, while a publick errour prevails, by which a whole nation may be ruined. Every man who enjoys property, has some share in the publick; and therefore the care of the publick, is, in some degree, every such man's concern.

To come to particulars; I could wish to know, whether it be utterly unlawful in any writer so much as to mention the prerogative; at least so far as to bring it into doubt upon any point what-

soever: I know it is often debated in Westminster hall; and sir Edward Coke, as well as other eminent lawyers, do frequently handle that subject in their books.

Secondly, how far the prerogative extends to force coin upon the subject, which is not sterling; such as lead, brass, copper, mixt metal, shells, leather, or any other material; and fix upon it whatever denomination the crown shall think fit?

Thirdly, what is really and truly meant by that phrase of a depending kingdom, as applied to Ireland, and wherein that dependency consists?

Lastly, In what points, relating to liberty and property, the people of Ireland differ, or at least ought to differ, from those of England.

If these particulars were made so clear that none could mistake them, it would be of infinite ease and use to the kingdom; and either prevent, or silence all discontents.

My lord Somers, the greatest man I ever knew of your robe, and whose thoughts of Ireland differed as far as Heaven and earth from those of some others among his brethren here, lamented to me, that the prerogative of the crown, or the privileges of parliament, should ever be liable to dispute in any single branch of either; by which means, he said, the publick often suffered great inconveniences, whereof he gave me several instances. I produce the authority of so eminent a person, to justify my desires that some high points might be cleared.

For want of such known ascertainment, how far a writer may proceed in expressing his good wishes for his country, a person of the most innocent intentions, may possibly, by the oratory and comments of lawyers,

yers, be charged with many crimes, which from his very soul he abhors; and consequently may be ruined in his fortunes, and left to rot among thieves in some stinking jail, merely for mistaking the purlieus of the law. I have known, in my lifetime, a printer prosecuted and convicted for publishing a pamphlet*, where the author's intentions, I am confident, were as good and innocent, as those of a martyr at his last prayers. I did very lately, as I thought it my duty, preach to the people under my inspection upon the subject of Mr. Wood's coin; and although I never heard that my sermon gave the least offence, as I am sure none was intended, yet, if it were now printed and published, I cannot say, I would ensure it from the hands of the common hangman, or my own person from those of a messenger.

I have heard the late chief justice Holt affirm, that in all criminal cases, the most favourable interpretation should be put upon words, that they can possibly bear. You meet the same position asserted in many trials for the greatest crimes; though often very ill practised by the perpetual corruption of judges. And I remember at a trial in Kent, where sir George Rook was indicted for calling a gentleman knave and villain, the lawyer for the defendant, brought off his client, by alleging that the words were not injurious; for knave in the old and true signification imported only a servant; and villain in Latin is *villicus*, which is no more than a man employed in country labour, or rather a bailif.

If sir John Holt's opinion were a standard maxim

* Supposed to be, A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures, written by the author.

for all times and circumstances, any writer, with a very small measure of discretion, might easily be safe; but I doubt, in practice, it has been frequently controlled, at least before his time: for I take it to be an old rule in law.

I have read, or heard, a passage of seignior Gregorio Leti an Italian; who, being in London, busying himself with writing the history of England, told king Charles the Second, that he endeavoured as much as he could to avoid giving offence, but found it a thing impossible, although he should have been as wise as Solomon. The king answered, that if this were the case, he had better employ his time in writing proverbs, as Solomon did: but Leti lay under no publick necessity of writing; neither would England have been one halfpenny the better or the worse, whether he writ or not.

This I mention, because I know it will readily be objected, what have private men to do with the publick? what call had a drapier to turn politician, to meddle in matters of state? would not his time have been better employed in looking to his shop; or his pen, in writing proverbs, elegies, ballads, garlands, and wonders? he would then have been out of all danger of proclamations and prosecutions. Have we not able magistrates and counsellors hourly watching over the publick weal? All this may be true: and yet, when the addresses from both houses of parliament against Mr. Wood's halfpence failed of success, if some pen had not been employed to inform the people how far they might legally proceed in refusing that coin, to detect the fraud, the artifice, and insolence of the coiner, and to lay open the most ruinous consequences to the whole kingdom, which would inevitably

evitably follow from the currency of the said coin, I might appeal to many hundred thousand people, whether any one of them would ever have had the courage or sagacity to refuse it.

If this copper should begin to make its way among the common ignorant people, we are inevitably undone. It is they, who give us the greatest apprehension, being easily frighted, and greedy to swallow misinformations; for, if every man were wise enough to understand his own interest, which is every man's principal study, there would be no need of pamphlets upon this occasion: but as things stand, I have thought it absolutely necessary, from my duty to God, my king, and my country, to inform the people, that the proclamation lately issued against the drapier, doth not in the least affect the case of Mr. Wood and his coin; but only refers to certain paragraphs in the drapier's last pamphlet (not immediately relating to his subject, nor at all to the merits of the cause) which the government was pleased to dislike; so that any man has the same liberty to reject, to write, and to declare against this coin, which he had before: neither is any man obliged to believe, that those honourable persons (whereof you are the first) who signed that memorable proclamation against the drapier, have at all changed their opinions with regard to Mr. Wood or his coin.

Therefore, concluding myself to be thus far upon a safe and sure foot, I shall continue upon any proper occasion, as God enables me, to revive and preserve that spirit raised in the nation (whether the real author were a real drapier or not is little to the purpose) against this horrid design of Mr. Wood; at the same time carefully watching every stroke of my

my pen, and venturing only to incur the publick censure of the world, as a writer, not of my lord chief justice Whitshed, as a criminal. Whenever an order shall come out by authority, forbidding all men, upon the highest penalties, to offer any thing in writing or discourse against Mr. Wood's halfpence, I shall certainly submit. However, if that should happen, I am determined to be somewhat more than the last man in the kingdom to receive them; because I will never receive them at all; for, although I know how to be silent, I have not yet learned to pay active obedience against my conscience, and the publick safety.

I desire to put a case, which I think the drapier in some of his books has put before me; although not so fully as it requires.

You know the copper halfpence in England are coined by the publick; and every piece worth pretty near the value of the copper. Now suppose, that instead of the publick coinage, a patent had been granted to some private obscure person, for coining a proportionable quantity of copper in that kingdom, to what Mr. Wood is preparing in this; and all of it at least five times below the intrinsick value: the current money of England is reckoned to be twenty millions; and ours under five hundred thousand pounds: by this computation, as Mr. Wood has power to give us 108000 pounds; so the patentee in England, by the same proportion, might circulate four millions three hundred and twenty thousand pounds; beside as much more by stealth and counterfeits. I desire to know from you, whether the parliament might not have addressed upon such an occasion; what success they probably

probably would have had; and how many drapiers would have risen to pester the world with pamphlets? yet that kingdom would not be so great a sufferer as ours in the like case; because their cash would not be conveyed into foreign countries, but lie hid in the chests of cautious thrifty men until better times. Then I desire, for the satisfaction of the publick, that you will please to inform me, why this country is treated in so very different a manner in a point of such high importance; whether it be on account of Poining's act; of subordination; dependence; or any other term of art, which I shall not contest, but am too dull to understand.

I am very sensible, that the good or ill success of Mr. Wood, will affect you less than any person of consequence in the kingdom; because I hear you are so prudent as to make all your purchases in England: and truly so would I, if I had money, although I were to pay a hundred years purchase; because I should be glad to possess a freehold, that could not be taken from me by any law to which I did not give my own consent; and where I should never be in danger of receiving my rents in mixt copper at the loss of sixteen shillings in the pound. You can live in ease and plenty at Pepper-hara in Surrey; and therefore I thought it extremely generous and publick spirited in you to be of the kingdom's side in this dispute, by showing without reserve your disapprobation of Mr. Wood's design; at least if you have been so frank to others as you were to me; which indeed I could not but wonder at, considering how much we differ in other points; and therefore I could get but few believers, when I attempted

tempted to justify you in this article from your own words.

I would humbly offer another thought, which I do not remember to have fallen under the drapier's observation. If these halfpence should once gain admittance, it is agreed, that in no long space of time, what by the clandestine practices of the coiner, what by his own counterfeits, and those of others either from abroad or at home, his limited quantity would be tripled upon us, until there would not be a grain of gold or silver visible in the nation. This in my opinion would lay a heavy charge upon the crown, by creating a necessity of transmitting money from England to pay the salaries at least of the principal civil officers: for I do not conceive how a judge (for instance) could support his dignity with a thousand pounds a year in Wood's coin; which would not intrinsically be worth near two hundred. To argue that these halfpence, if no other coin were current, would answer the general ends of commerce among ourselves, is a great mistake; and the drapier has made that matter too clear to admit an answer, by showing us what every owner of land must be forced to do with the products of it in such a distress. You may read his remarks at large in his second or third letter; to which I refer you.

Before I conclude, I cannot but observe, that for several months past there have more papers been written in this town, such as they are, all upon the best publick principle, the love of our country, than perhaps has been known in any other nation in so short a time: I speak in general from the drapier down to the maker of ballads; and all without any regard

regard to the common motives of writers; which are profit, favour, and reputation. As to profit, I am assured by persons of credit, that the best ballad upon Mr. Wood will not yield above a groat to the author; and the unfortunate adventurer Harding * declares he never made the drapier any present, except one pair of scissars. As to favour, whoever thinks to make his court by opposing Mr. Wood, is not very deep in politicks. And as to reputation, certainly no man of worth and learning would employ his pen upon so transitory a subject, and in so obscure a corner of the world, to distinguish himself as an author. So that I look upon myself, the drapier, and my numerous brethren, to be all true patriots in our several degrees.

All that the publick can expect for the future, is, only to be sometimes warned to beware of Mr. Wood's halfpence; and to be referred for conviction to the drapier's reasons. For, a man of the most superiour understanding, will find it impossible to make the best use of it, while he writes in constraint; perpetually softening, correcting, or blotting out expressions, for fear of bringing his printer, or himself, under a prosecution from my lord chief justice Whitshed. It calls to my remembrance the madman in Don Quixote, who, being soundly beaten by a weaver for letting a stone (which he always carried on his shoulder) fall upon a spaniel, apprehended that every cur he met was of the same species.

For these reasons I am convinced, that what I have now written will appear low and insipid; but, if it contributes in the least to preserve that union

* The printer of the drapier's letters.

among

among us for opposing this fatal project of Mr. Wood, my pains will not be altogether lost.

I sent these papers to an eminent lawyer* (and yet a man of virtue and learning into the bargain) who, after many alterations, returned them back with assuring me that they are perfectly innocent; without the least mixture of treason, rebellion, sedition, malice, disaffection, reflection, or wicked insinuation whatsoever.

If the bellman of each parish, as he goes his circuit, would cry out every night, Past twelve o'clock; Beware of Wood's halfpence; it would probably cut off the occasion for publishing any more pamphlets; provided that in country towns it were done upon market days. For my own part, as soon as it shall be determined that it is not against law, I will begin the experiment in the liberty of St. Patrick's; and hope my example may be followed in the whole city. But if authority shall think fit to forbid all writings or discourses upon this subject, except such as are in favour of Mr. Wood, I will obey as it becomes me; only, when I am in danger of bursting, I will go and whisper among the reeds, not any reflection upon the wisdom of my countrymen; but only these few words, BEWARE OF WOOD'S HALFPENCE. I am, with due respect,

your most obedient,
humble servant,
J. S.

Deanery-house,
Oct. 26, 1724.

* This "eminent lawyer" was Mr. Robert Lindsay, a polite and elegant scholar, at that time a celebrated pleader at the bar in Dublin, and afterward one of the judges of the court of common pleas, under which title he is named as executor to Dr. Swift's will. An epigram by Mr. Lindsay, with Dr. Swift's answer, first printed in "The Dreamer," are in vol. VII.

AN HUMBLE

ADDRESS

TO

BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

BY M. B. DRAPIER.

Multa gemens plagasque superbi
Victoris.——

I HAVE been told, that petitions and addresses, to either king or parliament*, are the right of every subject; provided they consist with that respect, which is due to princes and great assemblies. Neither do I remember, that the modest proposals or opinions of private men have been ill received, when they have not been delivered in the style of advice; which is a presumption far from my thoughts. However, if proposals should be looked upon as too assuming; yet I hope, every man may be suffered to declare his own and the nation's wishes. For instance; I may be allowed to wish, that some farther laws were enacted for the advancement of trade, for the improvement of agriculture, now strangely neglected,

* It should be—'either to' king or parliament. &c.

against

against the maxims of all wise nations: for supplying the manifest defects in the acts concerning the plantation of trees; for setting the poor to work; and many others.

Upon this principle I may venture to affirm, it is the hearty wish of the whole nation, very few excepted, that the parliament, in this session, would begin by strictly examining into the detestable fraud of one William Wood, now or late of London, hardwareman; who illegally and clandestinely, as appears by your own votes and addresses, procured a patent in England for coining halfpence in that kingdom to be current here. This, I say, is the wish of the whole nation, very few excepted; and upon account of those few, is more strongly and justly the wish of the rest: those few consisting either of Wood's confederates, some obscure tradesmen, or certain bold UNDERTAKERS, of weak judgment and strong ambition, who think to find their accounts in the ruin of the nation, by securing or advancing themselves. And because such men proceed upon a system of politicks, to which I would fain hope you will be always utter strangers, I shall humbly lay it before you.

Be pleased to suppose me in a station of fifteen hundred pounds a year, salary and perquisites; and likewise possessed of 800l. a year real estate. Then suppose a destructive project to be on foot; such for instance as this of Wood; which, if it succeed in all the consequences naturally to be expected from it, must sink the rents and wealth of the kingdom one half, although I am confident, it would have done so five sixths: Suppose, I conceive that the countenancing, or privately supporting this project

ject, will please those by whom I expect to be preserved, or higher exalted: nothing then remains, but to compute and balance my gain and my loss, and sum up the whole. I suppose that I shall keep my employment ten years, not to mention the fair chance of a better. This at 1500l. a year amounts in ten years to 15000. My estate by the success of the said project sinks 400l. a year; which, at twenty years purchase, is but 8000l. so that I am a clear gainer of 7000l. upon the balance. And during all that period I am possessed of power and credit, can gratify my favourites, and take vengeance on my enemies. And if the project miscarry, my private merit is still entire. This arithmetick, as horrible as it appears, I knowingly affirm to have been practised and applied, in conjunctures whereon depended the ruin or safety of a nation: although probably the charity and virtue of a senate will hardly be induced to believe, that there can be such monsters among mankind. And yet the wise lord Bacon mentions a sort of people (I doubt the race is not yet extinct) who would set a house on fire for the convenience of roasting their own eggs at the flame.

But whoever is old enough to remember, and has turned his thoughts to observe the course of publick affairs in this kingdom from the time of the revolution, must acknowledge, that the highest points of interest and liberty have been often sacrificed to the avarice and ambition of particular persons, upon the very principles and arithmetick that I have supposed: the only wonder is, how these artists were able to prevail upon numbers, and influence even publick

assemblies, to become instruments for effecting their execrable designs.

It is, I think, in all conscience, latitude enough for vice, if a man in station be allowed to act injustice upon the usual principles of getting a bribe, wreaking his malice, serving his party, or consulting his preferment, while his wickedness terminates in the ruin only of particular persons. But to deliver up our whole country, and every living soul who inhabits it, to certain destruction, has not, as I remember, been permitted by the most favourable casuists on the side of corruption. It were far better, that all who have had the misfortune to be born in this kingdom, should be rendered incapable of holding any employment whatsoever above the degree of a constable (according to the scheme and intention of a great minister* gone to his own place) than to live under the daily apprehension of a few false brethren among ourselves. Because, in the former case, we should be wholly free from the danger of being betrayed; since none could then have impudence enough to pretend any publick good.

It is true, that in this desperate affair of the new halfpence, I have not heard of any man above my own degree of a shopkeeper, to have been hitherto so bold, as in direct terms to vindicate the fatal project; although I have been told of some very mollifying expressions which were used, and very gentle expedients proposed and handed about, when it first came under debate: but, since the eyes of the people have been so far opened, that the most ignorant

* The late earl of Sunderland.

can

can plainly see their own ruin in the success of Wood's attempt, these grand compounders have been more cautious.

But, that the same spirit still subsists, has manifestly appeared (among other instances of great compliance) from certain circumstances, that have attended some late proceedings in a court of judicature. There is not any common place more frequently insisted on by those who treat of our constitution, than the great happiness and excellency of trials by juries; yet, if this blessed part of our law be eludible at pleasure, by the force of power, frowns, and artifice, we shall have little reason to boast of our advantage in this particular, over other states or kingdoms in Europe. And surely these high proceedings, exercised in a point that so nearly concerned the life-blood of the people, their necessary subsistence, their very food and raiment, and even the publick peace, will not allow any favourable appearance; because it was obvious, that so much superabundant zeal could have no other design, or produce any other effect, than to damp that spirit raised in the nation against this accursed scheme of William Wood and his abettors; to which spirit alone we owe, and for ever must owe, our being hitherto preserved, and our hopes of being preserved for the future, if it can be kept up, and strongly countenanced by your wise assemblies. I wish I could account for such a demeanor, upon a more charitable foundation, than that of putting our interest in over balance with the ruin of our country.

I remember some months ago, when this affair was fresh in discourse, a person nearly allied to SOMEBODY, or (as the hawkers called him) NOBODY,

NOBODY, who was thought deeply concerned, went about very diligently among his acquaintance, to show the bad consequences that might follow, from any publick resentment, to the disadvantage of his ally, Mr. Wood; principally alleging the danger of all employments being disposed of from England. One of these emissaries came to me, and urged the same topick: I answered naturally, that I knew there was no office of any kind, which a man from England might not have if he thought it worth his asking; and that I looked upon all who had the disadvantage of being born here, as only in the conditions of leasers and gleaners. Neither could I forbear mentioning the known fable of the countryman, who entreated his ass to fly, for fear of being taken by the enemy; but the ass refused to give himself that trouble, and upon a very wise reason; because he could not possibly change his present master for a worse: the enemy could not make him fare harder, beat him more cruelly, or load him with heavier burdens.

Upon these, and many other considerations, I may affirm it to be the wish of the whole nation, that the power and privileges of juries were declared, ascertained, and confirmed by the legislature; and that whoever has been manifestly known to violate them, might be stigmatized by publick censure; not from any hope that such a censure will amend their practices, or hurt their interest (for it may probably operate quite contrary in both) but that the nation may know their enemies, from their friends.

I say not this with any regard or view to myself; for I write in great security; and am resolved that none shall merit at my expense, farther than by showing

showing their zeal to discover, prosecute, and condemn me, for endeavouring to do my duty in serving my country: and yet I am conscious to myself, that I never had the least intention to reflect on his majesty's ministers, nor on any other person, except William Wood, whom I neither did, nor do yet conceive to be of that number. However, some would have it, that I went too far; but I suppose they will now allow themselves mistaken. I am sure I might easily have gone farther, and I think I could not easily have fared worse. And therefore I was no farther affected with their proclamation, and subsequent proceedings, than a good clergyman is, with the sins of the people. And as to the poor printer, he is now gone to appear before a higher, and before a righteous tribunal.

As my intention is only to lay before your great assemblies the general wishes of the nation; and as I have already declared it our principal wish, that your first proceeding would be to examine into the pernicious fraud of William Wood; so I must add, as the universal opinion, that all schemes of commutation, composition, and the like expedients, either avowed or implied, will be of the most pernicious consequences to the publick; against the dignity of a free kingdom; and prove an encouragement to future adventurers, in the same destructive projects. For it is a maxim, which no man at present disputes, that even a connivance to admit one thousand pounds in these halfpence, will produce, in time, the same ruinous effects, as if we openly consented to admit a million. It were therefore infinitely more safe and eligible to leave things in the doubtful, melancholy state they are at present (which however

God forbid) and trust entirely to the general aversion of our people against this coin, using all honest endeavours to preserve, continue, and increase that aversion, than submit to apply those palliatives, which weak, perfidious, or abject politicians, are, upon all occasions, and in all diseases, so ready to administer.

In the small compass of my reading (which however has been more extensive than is usual to men of my inferiour calling) I have observed that grievances have always preceded supplies; and if ever grievances had a title to such a preeminence, it must be this of Wood; because it is not only the greatest grievance that any country could suffer, but a grievance of such a kind, that if it should take effect, would make it impossible for us to give any supplies at all, except in adulterate copper; unless a tax were laid for paying the civil and military lists, and the large pensions, with real commodities instead of money; which however might be liable to some few objections as well as difficulties: for, although the common soldiers might be content with beef and mutton, and wool, and malt, and leather; yet I am in some doubt as to the generals, the colonels, the numerous pensioners, the civil officers and others, who all live in England upon Irish pay, as well as those few who reside among us only because they cannot help it.

There is one particular, which although I have mentioned more than once in some of my former papers, yet I cannot forbear to repeat, and a little enlarge upon it; because I do not remember to have read or heard of the like in the history of any age or country; neither do I ever reflect upon it without the utmost astonishment.

After

After the unanimous addresses to his sacred majesty against this patent of Wood, from both houses of parliament, which are the three estates of the kingdom; and likewise an address from the privy council, to whom, under the chief governors, the whole administration is intrusted; the matter is referred to a committee of council in London. Wood, and his adherents are heard on one side; and a few volunteers, without any trust or direction from hence, on the other. The question (as I remember) chiefly turned upon the want of halfpence in Ireland: witnesses are called on the behalf of Wood, of what credit I have formerly shown: upon the issue, the patent is found good and legal; all his majesty's officers here (not excepting the military) commanded to be aiding and assisting to make it effectual; the addresses of both houses of parliament, of the privy council, and of the city of Dublin, the declarations of most counties and corporations through the kingdom, are altogether laid aside, as of no weight, consequence, or consideration whatsoever; and the whole kingdom of Ireland nonsuited in default of appearance; as if it were a private cause between John Doe, plaintiff, and William Roe, defendant.

With great respect to those honourable persons, the committee of council in London, I have not understood them to be our governors, counsellors, or judges. Neither did our case turn at all upon the question, whether Ireland wanted halfpence. For there is no doubt, but we do want both halfpence, gold, and silver; and we have numberless other wants, and some that we are not so much as allowed to name, although they are peculiar to this nation; to which no other is subject, whom God

has blessed with religion and laws, or any degree of soil and sunshine: but for what demerits on our side I am altogether in the dark.

But I do not remember that our want of halfpence, was either affirmed, or denied, in any of our addresses or declarations against those of Wood. We alleged the fraudulent obtaining and executing of his patent; the baseness of his metal; and the prodigious sum to be coined, which might be increased by stealth, from foreign importation, and his own counterfeits, as well as those at home; whereby we must infallibly lose all our little gold and silver, and all our poor remainder of a very limited and discouraged trade. We urged, that the patent was passed without the least reference hither; and without mention of any security given by Wood to receive his own halfpence upon demand; both which are contrary to all former proceedings in the like cases. These and many other arguments we offered; but still the patent went on, and at this day our ruin would have been half completed, if God in his mercy had not raised a universal detestation of these halfpence in the whole kingdom, with a firm resolution never to receive them, since we are not under obligations to do so, by any law, either human or divine.

But in the name of God, and of all justice and piety, when the king's majesty was pleased that this patent should pass, is it not to be understood, that he conceived, believed, and intended it as a gracious act, for the good and benefit of his subjects, for the advantage of a great and fruitful kingdom; of the most loyal kingdom upon earth, where no hand or voice was ever lifted up against him; a kingdom,

kingdom, where the passage is not of three hours from Britain, and a kingdom where papists have less power and less land than in England? can it be denied, or doubted, that his majesty's ministers understood and proposed the same end, the good of this nation, when they advised the passing of this patent? can the person of Wood be otherwise regarded, than as the instrument, the mechanick, the head workman, to prepare his furnace, his fuel, his metal, and his stamps? if I employ a shoeboy, is it in view to his advantage, or to my own convenience? I mention the person of William Wood alone; because no other appears, and we are not to reason upon surmises; neither would it avail, if they had a real foundation.

Allowing therefore (for we cannot do less) that this patent for the coining of halfpence was wholly intended by a gracious king, and a wise publick-spirited ministry, for the advantage of Ireland; yet when the whole kingdom to a man, for whose good the patent was designed, do, upon maturest consideration, universally join in openly declaring, protesting, addressing, petitioning against these halfpence, as the most ruinous project that ever was set on foot, to complete the slavery and destruction of a poor innocent country: is it, was it, can it, or will it ever be a question, not, whether such a kingdom or William Wood, should be a gainer; but whether such a kingdom should be wholly undone, destroyed, sunk, depopulated, made a scene of misery and desolation, for the sake of William Wood? God of his infinite mercy avert this dreadful judgment! and it is our universal wish, that God would put it into

into your hearts, to be his instruments for so good a work.

For my own part, who am but one man, of obscure condition, I do solemnly declare, in the presence of Almighty God, that I will suffer the most ignominious and torturing death, rather than submit to receive this accursed coin, or any other that shall be liable to these objections, until they shall be forced upon me by a law of my own country; and, if that shall ever happen, I will transport myself into some foreign land, and eat the bread of poverty among a free people.

Am I legally punishable for these expressions? shall another proclamation issue against me, because I presume to take my country's part against William Wood, where her final destruction is intended? But whenever you shall please to impose silence upon me, I will submit; because I look upon your unanimous voice to be the voice of the nation; and this I have been taught, and do believe, to be in some manner the voice of God.

The great ignominy of a whole* kingdom lying so long at mercy under so vile an adversary, is such a deplorable aggravation, that the utmost expressions of shame and rage are too low to set it forth: and therefore I shall leave it to receive such a resentment, as is worthy of a parliament.

It is likewise our universal wish, that his majesty should grant liberty to coin halfpence in this kingdom for our own use, under such restriction as a parliament here shall advise: since the power of

* It should be,—'of a whole kingdom's lying,' &c.

coining

coining even gold and silver, is possessed by every petty prince abroad; and was always practised by Scotland to the very time of the union: yet surely Scotland, as to soil, climate, and extent, is not in itself a fourth part the value of Ireland, for bishop Burnet says, it is not above the fortieth part in value to the rest of Britain; and with respect to the profit that England gains from hence, not the forty thousandth part. Although I must confess, that a mote in the eye, or a thorn in the side, is more dangerous and painful, than a beam or a spike at a distance.

The histories of England, and of most other countries, abound in relating the miserable, and sometimes the most tragical effects from the abuses of coin by debasing the metal, by lessening or enhancing the value upon occasions, to the publick loss; of which we have an example within our own memory in England, and another very lately in France. It is the tenderest point of government, affecting every individual in the highest degree. When the value of money is arbitrary or unsettled, no man can well be said to have any property at all; nor is any wound so suddenly felt, so hardly cured, or that leaves such deep and lasting scars behind it.

I conceive this poor unhappy island to have a title to some indulgence from England; not only upon the score of Christianity, natural equity, and the general rights of mankind, but chiefly on account of that immense profit they receive from us; without which, that kingdom would make a very different figure in Europe, from what it does at present.

The rents of land in Ireland, since they have been of late so enormously raised and screwed up, may be

be computed to about two millions; whereof one third part at least is directly transmitted to those who are perpetual absentees in England; as I find by a computation made with the assistance of several skilful gentlemen.

The other articles, by which we are altogether losers and England a gainer, we found to amount to almost as much more.

I will only set down as many heads of them as I can remember, and leave them to the consideration of those who understand accounts better than I pretend to do.

The occasional absentees, for business, health, or diversion.

Three fourths of the revenue of the chief governor, during his absence; which is usually four fifths of his government.

The whole revenue of the post office.

The numerous pensions paid to persons in England.

The pay of the chief officers of the army absent in England, which is a great sum.

Four commissioners of the revenue, always absent.

Civil employments very numerous, and of great income.

The vast charge of appeals to the house of lords, and to the court of delegates.

Students at the inns of court, and the two universities.

Eighty thousand pounds sent yearly to England for coals: whereof the prime cost is nothing, and therefore the profit wholly theirs.

One hundred thousand pounds paid several years past for corn sent over hither from England; the effect

effect of our own great wisdom in discouraging agriculture.

The kind liberty granted us of wearing Indian stuffs, and calicoes, to gratify the vanity and folly of our women; which, beside the profit to England, is an inconceivable loss to us, forcing the weavers to beg in our streets, or transport themselves to foreign countries.

The prodigious loss to us, and gain to England, by selling them all our wool at their own rates; whereof the manufacture exceeds above ten times the prime cost: a proceeding without example in the christian or heathen world.

Our own wool returned upon us in English manufactures, to our infinite shame and damage, and the great advantage of England.

The full profit of all mines accruing to England; an effect of great negligence and stupidity.

An affectation among us of liking all kind of goods made in England.

These and many other articles, which I cannot recollect at present, are agreed by judicious men to amount to near seven hundred thousand pounds *per ann.* clear profit to England*. And upon the whole, let any man look into those authors who write upon the subject of commerce, he shall find, that there is not one single article in the essentials or circumstances of trade, whereby a country can be a loser, which we do not possess in the highest perfection; somewhat in every particular, that bears a kind of

* Many of the above articles have been since particularly compared in "A List of the Absentees of Ireland, and the yearly "Value of their Estates and Incomes spent abroad. By Thomas "Prior, esquire."

analogy

analogy to William Wood; and now the branches are all cut off, he stands ready with his axe at the root.

Upon this subject of perpetual absentees I have spent some time in very insignificant reflections; and considering the usual motives of human actions, which are pleasure, profit, and ambition, I cannot yet comprehend how those persons find their account in any of the three. I speak not of those English peers or gentlemen, who, beside their estates at home, have possessions here, for in that case the matter is desperate; but I mean those lords, and wealthy knights, or squires, whose birth, and partly their education, and all their fortune (except some trifle, and that in a very few instances) are in this kingdom. I knew many of them well enough during several years, when I resided in England; and truly I could not discover that the figure they made, was by any means a subject for envy; at least it gave me two very different passions. For, excepting the advantage of going now and then to an opera, or sometimes appearing behind a crowd at court, or adding to the ring of coaches in Hyde Park, or losing their money at the chocolate house, or getting news, votes, and minutes about five days before us in Dublin; I say, beside these, and a few other privileges of less importance, their temptations to live in London were beyond my knowledge or conception. And I used to wonder, how a man of birth and spirit, could endure to be wholly insignificant and obscure in a foreign country, when he might live with lustre in his own; and even at less than half that expense, which he strains himself to make without obtaining any one end, except that which happened

happened to the frog, when he would needs contend for size with the ox. I have been told by scholars, that Cæsar said he would rather be the first man in I know not what village, than the second in Rome. This perhaps was a thought only fit for Cæsar: but to be preceded by thousands, and neglected by millions; to be wholly without power, figure, influence, honour, credit, or distinction, is not in my poor opinion a very amiable situation of life, to a person of title or wealth, who can so cheaply and easily shine in his native country.

But, beside the depopulating of the kingdom, leaving so many parts of it wild and uncultivated, the ruin of so many country seats and plantations, the cutting down of all the woods to supply expenses in England; the absence of so many noble and wealthy persons, has been the cause of another fatal consequence, which few perhaps have been aware of. For, if that very considerable number of lords, who possess the amplest fortunes here, had been content to live at home, and attend the affairs of their own country in parliament; the weight, reputation, and dignity thereby added to that noble house, would, in all human probability, have prevented certain proceedings, which are now ever to be lamented, because they never can be remedied: and we might have then decided our own properties among ourselves, without being forced to travel five hundred miles by sea and land to another kingdom for justice, to our infinite expense, vexation, and trouble; which is a mark of servitude without example from the practice of any age or nation in the world.

I have sometimes wondered, upon what motives the

the peerage of England were so desirous to determine our controversies; because I have been assured, and partly know, that the frequent appeals from hence have been very irksome to that illustrious body: and whoever has frequented the painted chamber and courts of requests, must have observed, that they are never so nobly filled, as when an Irish appeal is under debate.

The peers of Scotland, who are very numerous, were content to reside in their castles and houses in that bleak and barren climate; and although some of them made frequent journies to London, yet I do not remember any of their greatest families, till very lately, to have made England their constant habitation before the union: or, if they did, I am sure it was generally to their own advantage; and whatever they got, was employed to cultivate and increase their own estates; and by that means enrich themselves and their country.

As to the great number of rich absentees under the degree of peers; what particular ill effects their absence may have upon this kingdom, beside those already mentioned, may perhaps be too tender a point for me to touch. But whether those who live in another kingdom upon great estates here, and have lost all regard to their own country, farther than upon account of the revenues they receive from it; I say, whether such persons may not be prevailed on to recommend others to vacant seats, who have no interest here except a precarious employment, and consequently can have no views, but to preserve what they have got, or to be higher advanced: this, I am sure, is a very melancholy question, if it be a question at all.

But,

But, beside the prodigious profit which England receives, by the transmittal thither of two thirds of the revenues of this whole kingdom, it has another mighty advantage, by making our country a receptacle, wherein to disburden themselves of their supernumerary pretenders to offices; persons of second rate merit in their own country, who, like birds of passage, most of them thrive and fatten here, and fly off when their credit and employments are at an end. So that Ireland may justly say, what Luther said of himself, POOR Ireland makes many rich.

If amid all our difficulties I should venture to assert, that we have one great advantage, provided we could improve it as we ought, I believe most of my readers would be long in conjecturing what possible advantage could ever fall to our share. However, it is certain, that all the regular seeds of party and faction among us are entirely rooted out; and if any new ones shall spring up, they must be of equivocal generation, without any seed at all; and will justly be imputed to a degree of stupidity, beyond even what we have been ever charged with upon the score of our birthplace and climate.

The parties in this kingdom (including those of modern date) are, first, of those who have been charged or suspected to favour the pretender; and those who were zealous opposers of him. Secondly, of those who were for and against a toleration of dissenters by law. Thirdly, of high and low church; or (to speak in the cant of the times) of whig and tory. And fourthly, of court and country. If there be any more, they are beyond my observation or politicks: for, as to subaltern or occasional parties,

they have been all derivations from the same originals.

Now it is manifest, that all these incitements to faction, party, and division, are wholly removed from among us. For, as to the pretender, his cause is both desperate and obsolete: there are very few now alive, who were men in his father's time, and in that prince's interest; and in all others, the obligation of conscience has no place: even the papists in general, of any substance or estates, and their priests almost universally are what we call whigs, in the sense which by that word is generally understood. They feel the smart, and see the scars of their former wounds; and very well know, that they must be made a sacrifice to the least attempts toward a change; although it cannot be doubted that they would be glad to have their superstition restored, under any prince whatsoever.

Secondly, the dissenters are now tolerated by law; neither do we observe any murmurs at present from that quarter, except those reasonable complaints they make of persecution, because they are excluded from civil employments; but their number being very small in either house of parliament, they are not yet in a situation to erect a party: because, however indifferent men may be with regard to religion, they are now grown wise enough to know, that if such a latitude were allowed to dissenters, the few small employments left us in cities and corporations, would find other hands to lay hold on them.

Thirdly, the dispute between high and low church is now at an end; two thirds of the bishops having been promoted in this reign, and most of them from England,

England, who have bestowed all preferments in their gift to those they could well confide in: The deaneries all, except three, and many principal church livings, are in the donation of the crown; so that we already possess such a body of clergy, as will never engage in controversy upon that antiquated and exploded subject.

Lastly, as to court and country parties, so famous and avowed under most reigns in English parliaments: this kingdom has not, for several years past, been a proper scene, whereon to exercise such contentions; and is now less proper than ever; many great employments for life being in distant hands, and the reversions diligently watched and secured; the temporary ones of any inviting value, are all bestowed elsewhere, as fast as they drop; and the few remaining, are of too low consideration, to create contests about them, except among younger brothers, or tradesmen like myself. And therefore, to institute a court and country party without materials, would be a very new system in politicks, and what I believe was never thought on before: nor, unless in a nation of idiots, can ever succeed; for the most ignorant Irish cottager will not sell his cow for a groat.

Therefore I conclude, that all party and faction, with regard to publick proceedings, are now extinguished in this kingdom; neither does it appear in view how they can possibly revive, unless some new causes be administered; which cannot be done, without crossing the interests of those, who are the greatest gainers by continuing the same measures. And general calamities without hope of redress, are allowed to be the great uniters of mankind.

However we may dislike the causes, yet this effect of begetting a universal concord among us, in all national debates, as well as in cities, corporations, and country neighbourhoods, may keep us at least alive, and in a condition to eat the little bread allowed us, in peace and amity. I have heard of a quarrel in a tavern, where all were at daggers drawing, till one of the company cried out, desiring to know the subject of the quarrel; which when none of them could tell, they put up their swords, sat down, and passed the rest of the evening in quiet. The former part has been our case, I hope the latter will be so too; that we shall sit down amicably together, at least until we have something that may give us a title to fall out, since nature has instructed even a brood of goslings to stick together, while the kite is hovering over their heads.

It is certain, that a firm union in any country, where every man wishes the same thing with relation to the publick, may, in several points of the greatest importance, in some measure supply the defect of power, and even of those rights, which are the natural and undoubted inheritance of mankind. If the universal wish of the nation upon any point were declared, by the unanimous vote of the house of commons, and a reasonable number of lords, I should think myself obliged in conscience to act in my sphere according to that vote; because in all free nations, I take the proper definition of law, to be the will of the majority of those who have the property in land; which, if there be a monarchy, is to be confirmed by the royal assent. And although such votes or declarations, have not received such a confirmation for certain accidental reasons; yet I think

think they ought to be of much weight with the subject, provided they neither oppose the king's prerogative, endanger the peace of the nation, nor infringe any law already in force; none of which however can reasonably be supposed. Thus for instance, if nine in ten of the house of commons, and a reasonable number of native temporal peers, should declare, that whoever received or uttered brass coin, except under certain limitations and securities, should be deemed as enemies to the king and the nation; I should think it a heinous sin in myself to act contrary to such a vote: and if the same power, should declare the same censure, against those who wore Indian stuffs and callicoes, or woollen manufactures imported from abroad, whereby this nation is reduced to the lowest ebb of misery, I should readily, heartily, and cheerfully pay obedience; and to my utmost power persuade others to do the like: because there is no law of this land obliging us either to receive such coin, or to wear such foreign manufactures.

Upon this last article I could humbly wish, that the reverend the clergy would set us an example, by contenting themselves with wearing gowns and other habiliments of Irish drapery; which, as it would be some incitement to the laity, and set many hands to work, so they would find their advantage in the cheapness, which is a circumstance not to be neglected by too many among that venerable body. And in order to this I could heartily desire that the most ingenious artists of the weaving trade, would contrive some decent stuffs and silk for clergymen at reasonable rates.

I have pressed several of our most substantial bre-

tiren, that the whole corporation of weavers in silk and woollen, would publish some proposals (I wish they would do it to both houses of parliament) inviting persons of all degrees, and of both sexes, to wear the woollen and silk manufactures of our own country; entering into solemn, mutual engagements, that the buyer shall have good, substantial, merchantable ware for his money, and at a certain rate, without the trouble of cheapening: so that if I sent a child for a piece of stuff of a particular colour and fineness, I should be sure not to be deceived; or, if I had reason to complain, the corporation should give me immediate satisfaction; and the name of the tradesman, who did me the wrong, should be published, and warning given not to deal with him for the future; unless the matter plainly appeared to be a mistake; for, beside the trouble of going from shop to shop, an ignorant customer runs the hazard of being cheated in the price and goodness of what he buys, being forced to an unequal combat, with a dextrous and dishonest man in his own calling. Thus our goods fall under a general disreputation; and the gentry call for English cloth, or silk, from an opinion they have (and often too justly by our own faults) that the goodness more than makes up for the difference of price.

Besides, it has been the sottish and ruinous practice of us tradesmen, upon any great demand of goods, either at home or from abroad, to raise the prices immediately, and manufacture the said goods more slightly and fraudulently than before.

Of this foul and foolish proceeding, too many instances might be produced; and I cannot forbear mentioning one, whereby this poor kingdom has received

ceived such a fatal blow, in the only article of trade allowed us of any importance, that nothing but the success of Wood's project could outdo it. During the late plague in France, the Spaniards, who buy their linen cloths in that kingdom, not daring to venture thither for fear of infection, a very great demand was made here for that commodity, and exported to Spain: but, whether by the ignorance of the merchants, or dishonesty of the northern weavers, or the collusion of both, the ware was so bad, and the price so excessive, that except some small quantity which was sold below the prime cost, the greatest part was returned: and I have been told by very intelligent persons, that if we had been fair dealers, the whole current of the linen trade to Spain, would have taken its course from hence.

If any punishment were to be inflicted on numbers of men, surely there could none be thought too great for such a race of traitors, and enemies to God and their country; who for the prospect of a little present gain, do not only ruin themselves (for that alone would be an example to the rest, and a blessing to the nation) but sell their souls to Hell, and their country to destruction. And if the plague could have been confined only to those who were partakers in the guilt, had it travelled hither from Marseilles, those wretches would have died with less title to pity, than a highwayman going to the gallows.

But it happens very unluckily, that for some time past, all endeavours or proposals from private persons to advance the publick service, however honestly and innocently designed, have been called FLYING IN THE KING'S FACE; and this to my knowledge

has been the style of some persons, whose ancestors, (I mean those among them who had any) and themselves, have been flying in princes faces these fourscore years; and from their own inclinations would do so still, if their interest did not lead them rather to fly in the face of a kingdom, which has given them wings to enable them for such a flight.

Thus, about four years ago, when a discourse was published endeavouring to persuade our people to wear their own woollen manufactures, full of the most dutiful expressions to the king, and without the least party hint, it was termed flying in the king's face; the printer was prosecuted in the manner we all remember, and I hope it will somewhere be remembered farther, the jury kept eleven hours, and sent back nine times, till they were under the necessity of leaving the prisoner to the mercy of the court, by a special verdict; the judge on the bench invoking God for his witness, when he asserted that the author's design was to bring in the pretender.

And thus also my own poor endeavours, to prevent the ruin of my country, by the admission of Wood's coin, were called by the same persons, flying in the king's face; which I directly deny: for I cannot allow that vile representation of the royal countenance, in William Wood's adulterate copper, to be his sacred majesty's face; or, if it were, my flying was not against the impression, but the baseness of the metal; because I well remembered, that the image which Nebuchadnezzar commanded to be set up for all men to fall down and worship it, was not of COPPER, but pure GOLD. And I am heartily sorry we have so few royal images of that metal among

among us; the sight whereof, although it could hardly increase our veneration for his majesty, which is already so great, yet would very much enliven it with the mixture of comfort and satisfaction.

Alexander the Great would suffer no statuary, except Phidias, to carve his image in stone or metal. How must he have treated such an operator as Wood, who goes about with sackfuls of dross, odiously misrepresenting his prince's countenance; and would force them by thousands upon every one of us at above six times the value!

But notwithstanding all that has been objected by William Wood himself, together with his favourers, abettors, supporters, either publick or private; by those who connive at this project, or discountenance his opposers, for fear of lessening their favour, or hazarding their employments; by those who endeavour to damp the spirit of the people, raised against this coin, or check the honest zeal of such, as by their writings or discourses do all they can to keep it up; by those softeners, sweeteners, compounders, and expedientmongers, who shake their heads so strongly that we can hear their pockets jingle; I did never imagine, that in detecting the practices of such enemies to the kingdom, I was flying in the king's face; or thought they were better representers of his majesty, than that very coin, for which they are secret or open advocates.

If I were allowed to recite only those wishes of the nation, which may be in our power to attain, I think they might be summed up in these few following.

First, that an end might be put to our apprehensions

sions of Wood's halfpence, and to any danger of the like destructive scheme for the future.

Secondly, that halfpence might be coined in this kingdom by a publick mint, with due limitations.

Thirdly, that the sense of both houses of parliament, at least of the house of commons, were declared by some unanimous and hearty votes, against wearing any silk or woollen manufactures imported from abroad; as likewise against wearing Indian silks or calicoes, which are forbidden under the highest penalties in England: and it behoves us to take example from so wise a nation; because we are under a greater necessity to do so, since we are not allowed to export any woollen manufactures of our own; which is the principal branch of foreign trade in England.

Fourthly, that some effectual methods may be taken, to civilize the poorer sort of our natives, in all those parts of this kingdom where the Irish abound, by introducing among them our language and customs*; for want of which, they live in the utmost ignorance, barbarity, and poverty, giving themselves wholly up to idleness, nastiness, and thievery, to the very great and just reproach of too many landlords. And, if I had in me the least spirit of a projector, I would engage, that this

* Since this hint was suggested, several useful seminaries have been instituted, under the name of "Charter Working Schools" "in Ireland, supported by the royal benefaction of a thousand pounds a year, by a tax on hawkers and pedlars, and by voluntary subscriptions. These schools are for the education of boys and girls born of popish parents; in most of them, the children manufacture their own clothing, and the boys are employed in matters relative to husbandry.

might

might be effected in a few years at a very inconsiderable charge.

Fifthly, that due encouragement should be given to agriculture; and a stop put to that pernicious practice of graziers engrossing vast quantities of land, sometimes at great distance; whereby the country is extremely depopulated.

Sixthly, that the defects in those acts for planting forest trees, might be fully supplied, since they have hitherto been wholly ineffectual, except about the demesnes of a few gentlemen; and even there in general, very unskilfully made, and thriving accordingly. Neither has there yet been due care taken to preserve what is planted, or to enclose grounds; not one hedge in a hundred coming to maturity, for want of skill and industry. The neglect of copsing woods cut down, has likewise been of very ill consequence. And if men were restrained from that unlimited liberty of cutting down their own woods, before the proper time, as they are in some other countries, it would be a mighty benefit to the kingdom. For, I believe, there is not another example in Europe, of such a prodigious quantity of excellent timber cut down in so short a time, with so little advantage to the country, either in shipping or building.

I may add that absurd practice of cutting turf without any regularity; whereby great quantities of restorable land are made utterly desperate, many thousands of cattle destroyed, the turf more difficult to come at and carry home, and less fit for burning; the air made unwholesome by stagnating pools and marshes; and the very sight of such places offensive to those who ride by. Neither should that odious

odious custom be allowed of cutting scraws (as they call them) which is flaying off the green surface of the ground, to cover their cabins, or make up their ditches; sometimes in shallow soils, where all is gravel within a few inches; and sometimes in low ground, with a thin greensward, and sloughy underneath; which last turns all into bog by this mismanagement. And I have heard from very skilful countrymen, that by these two practices in turf and scraws, the kingdom loses some hundreds of acres of profitable land every year; beside the irreparable loss of many skirts of bogs, which have a green coat of grass, and yet are mangled for turf; and beside the want of canals by regular cutting, which would not only be a great convenience for bringing their turf home at an easy rate, but likewise render even the larger bogs more dry and safe for summer pasture.

These, and some other speculations of the like kind, I had intended to publish in a particular discourse against this session of parliament; because, in some periods of my life, I had opportunity and curiosity to observe, from what causes those great errours in every branch of country management have arisen; of which I have now ventured to relate but few out of very many; whereof some perhaps would not be mentioned without giving offence, which I have endeavoured by all possible means to avoid. And for the same reason, I chose to add here, the little I thought proper to say on this subject.

But, as to the lands of those who are perpetual absentees, I do not see any probability of their being ever improved. In former times their tenants sat at easy rents; but for some years past, they have been,

been, generally speaking, more terribly racked by the dexterity of merciless agents from England, than even those who held under the severest landlords here. I was assured upon the place, by great numbers of credible people, that a prodigious estate in the county of Cork being let upon leases for lives and great fines paid, the rent was so high, that the tenants begged leave to surrender their leases, and were content to lose their fines.

The cultivating and improving of land is certainly a subject worthy of the highest inquiry in any country, but especially in ours; where we are so strangely limited in every branch of trade that can be of advantage to us, and utterly deprived of those, which are of the greatest importance; whereof I defy the most learned man in Europe, to produce me an example from any other kingdom in the world: for, we are denied the benefit which God and nature intended to us; as manifestly appears by our happy situation for commerce, and the great number of our excellent ports. So that I think little is left us, beside the cultivating of our own soil, encouraging agriculture, and making great plantations of trees, that we might not be under the necessity of sending for corn and bark from England, and timber from other countries. This would increase the number of our inhabitants, and help to consume our natural products, as well as manufactures at home. And I shall never forget what I once ventured to say to a great man in England, that few politicians, with all their schemes, are half so useful members of a commonwealth, as an honest farmer; who, by skilfully draining, fencing, manuring, and planting, has increased the intrinsick

trinsick value of a piece of land; and thereby done a perpetual service to his country: which it is a great controversy whether any of the former ever did since the creation of the world; but no controversy at all that ninety-nine in a hundred have done abundance of mischief.

A FULL

A FULL AND TRUE

ACCOUNT

OF THE

SOLEMN PROCESSION TO THE GALLOWS, AT THE EXECUTION OF WILLIAM WOOD, ESQUIRE AND HARDWAREMAN.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1724.

SOME time ago, upon a report spread that William Wood, hardwareman, was concealed in his brother-in-law's* house here in Dublin, a great number of people of different conditions, and of both sexes, crowded about the door, determinately bent to take revenge upon him as a coiner and a counterfeiter. Among the rest, a certain curious person standing in a corner observed, that they all discovered their resentments in the proper terms and expressions of their several trades and callings; whereof he wrote down as many as he could remember; and was pleased to communicate them to me, with leave to publish them, for the use of those who at any time hereafter may be at a loss for proper words, wherein to ex-

* One Molyneux an ironmonger.

press

press their good dispositions toward the said William Wood.

The people cried out to have him delivered into their hands.

Says the parliament man, expel him the house.

2d parliament man, I second that motion.

Cook. I'll baste him.

2d Cook. I'll give him his bellyful.

3d Cook. I'll give him a lick in the chaps.

4th Cook. I'll sowse him.

Drunken man. I'll beat him as long as I can stand.

Bookseller.. I'll turn over a new leaf with him.

Sadler. I'll pummel him.

Glazier. I'll make the light shine through him.

Grocer. I'll pepper him.

Groom. I'll curry his hide.

'Pothecary. I'll pound him.

2d 'Pothecary. I'll beat him to mummy.

Schoolmaster. I'll make him an example.

Rabbet catcher. I'll ferret him.

Paviour. I'll thump him.

Coiner. I'll give him a rap.

WHIG. Down with him.

TORY. Up with him.

Miller. I'll dash out his grinders.

2d Miller. Damn him.

Boatman. Sink him.

Scavenger. Throw him in the kennel.

Dyer. I'll beat him black and blue.

Bagnio man. I'll make the house too hot for him.

Whore. Pox rot him.

2d Whore. Let me alone with him.

3d Whore.

3d Whore. Clap him up.

Mustard-maker. I'll have him by the nose.

Curate. I'll make the devil come out of him.

Popish priest. I'll send him to the devil.

Dancingmaster. I'll teach him better manners.

2d Dancingmaster. I'll make him cut a caper three story high.

Farmer. I'll thrash him.

Taylor. I'll sit on his skirts.

2d Taylor. Hell is too good for him.

3d Taylor. I'll pink his doublet.

4th Taylor. I'll make his a—— make buttons.

Basketmaker. I'll hamper him.

Fiddler. I'll have him by the ears.

2d Fiddler. I'll bang him to some tune.

Barber. I'll have him by the beard.

2d Barber. I'll pull his whiskers.

3d Barber. I'll make his hair stand on end.

4th Barber. I'll comb his locks.

Tinker. I'll try what metal he's made of.

Cobler. I'll make an end of him.

Tobacconist. I'll make him smoke.

2d Tobacconist. I'll make him set up his pipes.

Goldfinder. I'll make him stink.

Hackney coachman. I'll make him know his driver.

2d Hackney coachman. I'll drive him to the devil.

Butcher. I'll have a limb of him.

2d Butcher. Let us blow him up.

3d Butcher. My knife in him.

Nurse. I'll swaddle him.

Anabaptist. We'll dip the rogue in the pond.

Ostler. I'll rub him down.

Shoemaker. Set him in the stocks.
Banker. I'll kick him to half crowns.
2d Banker. I'll pay him off.
Bowler. I'll have a rubber with him.
Gamester. I'll make his bones rattle.
Boddicemaker. I'll lace his sides.
Gardener. I'll make him water his plants.
Alewife. I'll reckon with him.
Cuckold. I'll make him pull in his horns.
Old Woman. I'll mumble him.
Hangman. I'll throttle him.

But at last the people having received assurances that William Wood was neither in the house nor kingdom, appointed certain commissioners to hang him in effigy; whereof the whole ceremony and procession deserve to be transmitted to posterity.

First, the way was cleared by a detachment of the black-guards, with short sticks in their hands, and cockades of paper in their hats.

Then appeared William Wood, esq., represented to the life by an old piece of carved timber, taken from the keel of a ship. Upon his face, which looked very dismal, were fixed at proper distances several pieces of his own coin, to denote who he was, and to signify his calling and his crime. He wore on his head a peruke, very artfully composed of four old mops; a halter about his neck served him for a cravat. His clothes were indeed not so neat and elegant as is usual with persons in his condition (which some censorious people imputed to affectation) for he was covered with a large rug of several colours in patchwork: he was born upon the shoulders of an ablebodied porter. In his march

by

by St. Stephen's green, he often bowed on both sides, to show his respects to the company; his deportment was grave; and his countenance, though somewhat pensive, was very composed.

Behind him followed his father alone, in a long mourning cloak, with his hat over his nose, and a handkerchief in his hand to wipe tears from his face.

Next in order marched the excutioner himself in person; whose venerable aspect drew the eyes of the whole assembly upon him; but he was farther distinguished by a halter, which he bore upon his left shoulder as the badge of his office.

Then followed two persons hand in hand; the one representing William Wood's brother-in-law; the other a certain saddler, his intimate friend, whose name I forget. Each had a small kettle in his hand, wherein was a reasonable quantity of the new halfpence. At proper periods they shook their kettles, which made a melancholy sound, like the ringing of a knell for their partner and confederate.

After these followed several officers, whose assistance was necessary for the more decent performance of the great work in hand.

The procession was closed with an innumerable crowd of people, who frequently sent out loud huzzas; which were censured by wiser heads as a mark of inhumanity, and an ungenerous triumph over the unfortunate, without duly considering the various vicissitudes of human life. However, as it becomes an impartial historian, I will not conceal one observation, that Mr. Wood himself appeared wholly unmoved, without the least alteration in his countenance; only when he came within sight of the fatal tree, which happened to be of the same species

of timber with his own person, he seemed to be somewhat pensive.

At the place of execution he appeared undaunted, nor was seen to shed a tear. He made no resistance, but submitted himself with great resignation to the hangman, who was indeed thought to use him with too much roughness, neither kissing him, nor asking him pardon. His dying SPEECH was printed, and deserves to be written in letters of GOLD. Being asked whether it were his own true genuine SPEECH, he did not deny it.

Those of the softer sex, who attended the ceremony, lamented that so comely and well timbered a man should come to so untimely an end. He hung but a short time; for, upon feeling his breast, they found it cold and stiff.

It is strange to think, how this melancholy spectacle turned the hearts of the people to compassion. When he was cut down, the body was carried through the whole city to gather contributions for his wake; and all sorts of people showed their liberality according as they were able. The ceremony was performed in an alehouse of distinction, and in a manner suitable to the quality of the deceased. While the attendants were discoursing about his funeral, a worthy member of the assembly stood up, and proposed that the body should be carried out the next day, and burned with the same pomp and formalities used at his execution: which would prevent the malice of his enemies, and all indignities that might be done to his remains. This was agreed to; and about nine o'clock on the following morning there appeared a second procession. But, burning not having been any part of the sentence, authority thought

thought fit to interpose, and the corpse was rescued by the civil power.

We hear the body is not yet interred; which occasions many speculations. But what is more wonderful, it is positively affirmed by many who pretend to have been eyewitnesses, that there does not appear to be the least alteration in any one lineament or feature of his countenance; nor visible decay in his whole frame, farther than what had been made by worms long before his execution. The solution of which difficulty I shall leave among naturalists.

A

SHORT VIEW

OF THE

STATE OF IRELAND.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1727.

I AM assured, that it has for some time been practised as a method of making men's court, when they are asked about the rate of lands, the abilities of tenants, the state of trade and manufacture in this kingdom, and how their rents are paid; to answer, that in their neighbourhood all things are in a flourishing condition, the rent and purchase of land every day increasing. And if a gentleman happen to be a little more sincere in his representation; beside being looked on as not well affected, he is sure to have a dozen contradictors at his elbow. I think it is no manner of secret, why these questions are so cordially asked, or so obligingly answered.

But since, with regard to the affairs of this kingdom, I have been using all endeavours to subdue my indignation; to which indeed I am not provoked by any personal interest, not being the owner of one spot of ground in the whole island; I shall only enumerate

enumerate by rules generally known, and never contradicted, what are the true causes of any country's flourishing and growing rich; and then examine what effects arise from those causes in the kingdom of Ireland.

The first cause of a kingdom's thriving is, the fruitfulness of the soil to produce the necessaries and conveniences of life; not only sufficient for the inhabitants, but for exportation into other countries.

The second is, the industry of the people, in working up all their native commodities to the last degree of manufacture.

The third is, the conveniency of safe ports and havens, to carry out their own goods as much manufactured, and bring in those of others as little manufactured, as the nature of mutual commerce will allow.

The fourth is, that the natives should, as much as possible, export and import their goods in vessels of their own timber, made in their own country.

The fifth is, the privilege of a free trade in all foreign countries which will permit them, except those who are in war with their own prince or state.

The sixth is, by being governed only by laws made with their own consent; for otherwise they are not a free people. And therefore all appeals for justice, or applications for favour or preferment, to another country, are so many grievous impoverishments.

The seventh is, by improvement of land, encouragement of agriculture, and thereby increasing the number of their people; without which, any country, however blessed by nature, must continue poor.

The eighth is, the residence of the prince, or chief administrator of the civil power.

The ninth is, the concourse of foreigners, for education, curiosity, or pleasure; or, as to a general mart of trade.

The tenth is, by disposing all offices of honour, profit, or trust, only to the natives; or at least with very few exceptions, where strangers have long inhabited the country, and are supposed to understand and regard the interests of it as their own.

The eleventh is, when the rents of land and profits of employments are spent in the country which produced them, and not in another; the former of which will certainly happen where the love of our native country prevails.

The twelfth is, by the publick revenues being all spent and employed at home, except on the occasions of a foreign war.

The thirteenth is, where the people are not obliged, unless they find it for their own interest or conveniency, to receive any monies, except of their own coinage by a publick mint, after the manner of all civilized nations.

The fourteenth is, a disposition of the people of a country to wear their own manufactures, and import as few incitements to luxury, either in clothes, furniture food, or drink, as they possibly can live conveniently without.

There are many other causes of a nation's thriving, which I at present cannot recollect: but without advantage from at least some of these, after turning my thoughts a long time, I am not able to discover whence our wealth proceeds, and therefore would gladly

gladly be better informed. In the mean time I will here examine what share falls to Ireland of these causes, or of the effects and consequences.

It is not my intention to complain, but barely to relate facts; and the matter is not of small importance. For it is allowed, that a man who lives in a solitary house, far from help, is not wise in endeavouring to acquire in the neighbourhood the reputation of being rich; because those who come for gold, will go off with pewter and brass, rather than return empty: and in the common practice of the world, those who possess most wealth, make the least parade; which they leave to others, who have nothing else to bear them out in showing their faces on the exchange.

As to the first cause of a nation's riches, being the fertility of the soil, as well as temperature of climate, we have no reason to complain; for, although the quantity of unprofitable land in this kingdom, reckoning bog and rock and barren mountain, be double in proportion to what it is in England; yet the native productions, which both kingdoms deal in, are very near an equality in point of goodness, and might, with the same encouragement, be as well manufactured. I except mines and minerals; in some of which however we are only defective in point of skill and industry.

In the second, which is the industry of the people, our misfortune is not altogether owing to our own fault, but to a million of discouragements.

The conveniency of ports and havens, which nature has bestowed so liberally on this kingdom, is of no more use to us, than a beautiful prospect to a man shut up in a dungeon.

As

As to shipping of its own, Ireland is so utterly unprovided, that of all the excellent timber cut down within these fifty or sixty years, it can hardly be said that the nation has received the benefit of one valuable house to dwell in, or one ship to trade with.

Ireland is the only kingdom I ever heard or read of, either in ancient or modern story, which was denied the liberty of exporting their native commodities and manufactures wherever they pleased, except to countries at war with their own prince or state: yet this privilege, by the superiority of mere power, is refused us in the most momentous parts of commerce; beside an act of navigation, to which we never consented, pinned down upon us, and rigorously executed; and a thousand other unexampled circumstances, as grievous as they are invidious to mention. To go on to the rest.

It is too well known, that we are forced to obey some laws we never consented to; which is a condition I must not call by its true uncontroverted name, for fear of lord chief justice Whitshed's ghost with his *libertas et natale solum**, written for a motto on his coach, as it stood at the door of the court, while he was perjuring himself to betray both. Thus we are in the condition of patients, who have physick sent them by doctors at a distance, strangers to their constitution and the nature of their disease: and thus we are forced to pay five hundred per cent to decide our properties: in all which we have likewise the honour to be distinguished from the whole race of mankind.

As to the improvement of land; those few, who

* Liberty and my native country.

attempt

attempt that or planting, through covetousness, or want of skill, generally leave things worse than they were; neither succeeding in trees nor hedges; and by running into the fancy of grazing, after the manner of the Scythians, are every day depopulating the country.

We are so far from having a king to reside among us, that even the viceroy is generally absent four fifths of his time in the government*.

No strangers from other countries make this a part of their travels; where they can expect to see nothing but scenes of misery and desolation.

Those who have the misfortune to be born here, have the least title to any considerable employment; to which they are seldom preferred, but upon a political consideration.

One third part of the rents of Ireland is spent in England; which, with the profit of employments, pensions, appeals, journies of pleasure or health, education at the inns of court and both universities, remittances at pleasure, the pay of all superiour officers in the army, and other incidents, will amount to a full half of the income of the whole kingdom, all clear profit to England.

We are denied the liberty of coining gold, silver, or even copper. In the Isle of Man they coin their own silver; every petty prince, vassal to the emperor, can coin what money he pleases. And in this, as in most of the articles already mentioned, we are an exception to all other states or monarchies, that were ever known in the world.

* There has lately been a change in this article, as the viceroy now resides in Ireland, during the whole time of his government.

As

As to the last, or fourteenth article, we take special care to act diametrically contrary to it in the whole course of our lives. Both sexes, but especially the women, despise and abhor to wear any of their own manufactures, even those which are better made than in other countries; particularly a sort of silk plaid, through which the workmen are forced to run a kind of gold thread that it may pass for Indian. Even ale and potatoes are imported from England, as well as corn; and our foreign trade is little more than importation of French wine, for which I am told we pay ready money.

Now, if all this be true (upon which I could easily enlarge) I should be glad to know, by what secret method it is, that we grow a rich and flourishing people, without liberty, trade, manufactures, inhabitants, money, or the privilege of coining; without industry, labour or improvement of land; and with more than half the rent and profits of the whole kingdom annually exported, for which we receive not a single farthing: and to make up all this, nothing worth mentioning, except the linen of the North, a trade casual, corrupted, and at mercy; and some butter from Cork. If we do flourish, it must be against every law of nature and reason; like the thorn at Glastonbury, that blossoms in the midst of winter.

Let the worthy commissioners, who come from England, ride round the kingdom, and observe the face of nature, or the face of the natives; the improvement of the land; the thriving numerous plantations; the noble woods; the abundance and vicinity of country seats; the commodious farmers houses and barns; the towns and villages, where every body is busy, and thriving with all kind of manufactures;

be nameless, are the only thriving people among us: and I have often wished, that a law were enacted to hang up half a dozen bankers every year, and thereby interpose, at least some short delay to the farther ruin of Ireland.

Ye are idle, ye are idle, answered Pharaoh to the Israelites, when they complained to his majesty, that they were forced to make bricks without straw.

England enjoys every one of those advantages for enriching a nation, which I have above enumerated; and, into the bargain, a good million returned to them every year without labour or hazard, or one farthing value received on our side: but how long we shall be able to continue the payment, I am not under the least concern. One thing I know, that when the hen is starved to death, there will be no more golden eggs.

I think it a little unhospitable, and others may call it a subtile piece of malice, that because there may be a dozen families in this town, able to entertain their English friends in a generous manner at their tables, their guests upon their return to England shall report, that we wallow in riches and luxury.

Yet, I confess, I have known an hospital, where all the houshold officers grew rich; while the poor, for whose sake it was built, were almost starving for want of food and raiment.

To conclude, if Ireland be a rich and flourishing kingdom, its wealth and prosperity must be owing to certain causes, that are yet concealed from the whole race of mankind; and the effects are equally invisible. We need not wonder at strangers, when they deliver such paradoxes; but a native

a native and inhabitant of this kingdom, who gives the same verdict, must be either ignorant to stupidity, or a manpleaser at the expense of all honour, conscience, and truth.

AN

AN

ANSWER

TO

A PAPER

CALLED A MEMORIAL* OF THE POOR INHABITANTS, TRADESMEN, AND LABOURERS OF THE KINGDOM OF IRELAND.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1728.

I RECEIVED a paper from you, whoever you are, printed without any name of author or printer; and sent, I suppose, to me among others without any particular distinction. It contains a complaint of the dearness of corn; and some schemes for making it cheaper, which I cannot approve of.

But pray permit me, before I go farther, to give you a short history of the steps by which we arrived at this hopeful situation.

It was indeed the shameful practice of too many Irish farmers, to wear out their ground with ploughing; while, either through poverty, laziness, or ignorance, they neither took care to manure it as they ought, nor gave time to any part of the land to re-

* The memorial was written by sir John Browne.

cover itself; and when their leases were near expiring, being assured that their landlords would not renew, they ploughed even the meadows, and made such havock, that many landlords were considerable sufferers by it.

This gave birth to that abominable race of graziers, who, upon expiration of the farmers leases, were ready to engross great quantities of land; and the gentlemen having been before often ill paid, and their land worn out of heart, were too easily tempted, when a rich grazier made an offer to take all their land, and give them security for payment. Thus, a vast tract of land, where twenty or thirty farmers lived, together with their cottagers and labourers in their several cabins, became all desolate, and easily managed by one or two herdsmen and their boys; whereby the master grazier, with little trouble, seized to himself the livelihood of a hundred people.

It must be confessed, that the farmers were justly punished for their knavery, brutality, and folly. But neither are the squires and landlords to be excused; for to them is owing the depopulating of the country, the vast number of beggars, and the ruin of those few sorry improvements we had.

That farmers should be limited in ploughing, is very reasonable, and practised in England; and might have easily been done here by penal clauses in their leases: but to deprive them in a manner altogether from tilling their lands, was a most stupid want of thinking.

Had the farmers been confined to plough a certain quantity of land, with a penalty of ten pounds an acre for whatever they exceeded, and farther limited

for

for the three or four last years of their leases, all this evil had been prevented; the nation would have saved a million of money; and been more populous by above two hundred thousand souls.

For a people, denied the benefit of trade, to manage their lands in such a manner as to produce nothing, but what they are forbidden to trade with, or only such things, as they can neither export, nor manufacture to advantage, is an absurdity that a wild Indian would be ashamed of; especially when we add, that we are content to purchase this hopeful commerce, by sending to foreign markets for our daily bread.

The grazier's employment is to feed great flocks of sheep, or black cattle, or both. With regard to sheep, as folly is usually accompanied with perverseness, so it is here. There is something so monstrous to deal in a commodity (farther than for our own use) which we are not allowed to export manufactured, nor even unmanufactured, but to one certain country, and only to some few ports in that country; there is, I say, something so sottish, that it wants a name in our language to express it by: and the good of it is, that the more sheep we have, the fewer human creatures are left to wear the wool, or eat the flesh. Ajax was mad, when he mistook a flock of sheep for his enemies: but we shall never be sober, until we have the same way of thinking.

The other part of the grazier's business is, what we call black cattle, producing hides, tallow, and beef for exportation: all which are good and useful commodities, if rightly managed. But it seems, the greatest part of the hides are sent out raw, for want of bark to tan them; and that want will daily

grow stronger; for, I doubt, the new project of tanning without it is at an end. Our beef, I am afraid, still continues scandalous in foreign markets for the old reasons. But our tallow, for any thing I know, may be good. However, to bestow the whole kingdom on beef and mutton, and thereby drive out half the people, who should eat their share, and force the rest, to send sometimes as far as Egypt for bread to eat with it, is a most peculiar and distinguished piece of publick economy, of which I have no comprehension.

I know very well that our ancestors the Scythians, and their posterity our kinsmen the Tartars, lived upon the blood, and milk, and raw flesh of their cattle, without one grain of corn; but I confess myself so degenerate, that I am not easy without bread to my victuals.

What amazed me for a week or two, was to see, in this prodigious plenty of cattle, and dearth of human creatures, and want of bread, as well as money to buy it, that all kind of flesh meat should be monstrously dear, beyond what was ever known in this kingdom. I thought it a defect in the laws, that there was not some regulation in the price of flesh, as well as bread: but I imagine myself to have guessed out the reason: in short, I am apt to think, that the whole kingdom is overstocked with cattle, both black and white: and as it is observed, that the poor Irish have a vanity to be rather owners of two lean cows, than one fat, although with double the charge of grazing, and but half the quantity of milk; so I conceive it much more difficult at present, to find a fat bullock or wether, than it would be if half of them were fairly knocked on the

the head: for I am assured, that the district in the several markets, called carrion row, is as reasonable as the poor can desire; only the circumstances of money to purchase it, and of trade, or labour, to purchase that money, are indeed wholly wanting.

Now, sir, to return more particularly to you, and your memorial.

A hundred thousand barrels of wheat, you say, should be imported hither; and ten thousand pounds premium to the importers. Have you looked into the purse of the nation? I am no commissioner of the treasury; but am well assured, that the whole running cash would not supply you with a sum to purchase so much corn, which, only at twenty shillings a barrel, will be a hundred thousand pounds; and ten thousand more for the premium. But you will traffick for your corn with other goods: and where are those goods? if you had them, they are all engaged to pay the rents of absentees, and other occasions in London, beside a huge balance of trade this year against us. Will foreigners take our bankers paper? I suppose, they will value it at little more than so much a quire. Where are these rich farmers and engrossers of corn, in so bad a year, and so little sowing?

You are in pain for two shillings premium, and forget the twenty shillings for the price; find me out the latter, and I will engage for the former.

Your scheme for a tax for raising such a sum is all visionary, and owing to a great want of knowledge in the miserable state of this nation. Tea, coffee, sugar, spices, wine, and foreign cloths, are the particulars you mention, upon which this tax should be raised. I will allow the two first; because they are unwholesome; and the last, because I should be

glad if they were all burned; but I beg you will leave us our wine to make us a while forget our misery; or give your tenants leave to plough for barley. But I will tell you a secret, which I learned many years ago from the commissioners of the customs in London; they said, when any commodity appeared to be taxed above a moderate rate, the consequence was, to lessen that branch of the revenue by one half; and one of those gentlemen pleasantly told me, that the mistake of parliaments, on such occasions, was owing to an errour of computing two and two to make four; whereas in the business of laying impositions, two and two never made more than one; which happens by lessening the import, and the strong temptation of running such goods as paid high duties, at least in this kingdom. Although the women are as vain and extravagant, as their lovers or their husbands can deserve; and the men are fond enough of wine; yet the number of both, who can afford such expenses, is so small, that the major part must refuse gratifying themselves, and the duties will rather be lessened than increased. But, allowing no force in this argument; yet so preternatural a sum, as one hundred and ten thousand pounds, raised all on a sudden (for there is no dallying with hunger) is just in proportion with raising a million and a half in England; which, as things now stand, would probably bring that opulent kingdom under some difficulties.

You are concerned how strange and surprising it would be in foreign parts to hear that the poor were starving in a RICH country, etc. Are you in earnest? is Ireland the rich country you mean? or are you insulting our poverty? were you ever out of Ireland? or

or were you ever in it till of late? You may probably have a good employment, and are saving all you can to purchase a good estate in England. But by talking so familiarly of one hundred and ten thousand pounds, by a tax upon a few commodities, it is plain, you are either naturally or affectedly ignorant of our present condition; or else you would know and allow, that such a sum is not to be raised here, without a general excise; since in proportion to our wealth, we pay already in taxes more than England ever did, in the height of the war. And when you have brought over your corn, who will be the buyers? most certainly, not the poor, who will not be able to purchase the twentieth part of it.

Sir, upon the whole, your paper is a very crude piece, liable to more objections than there are lines; but, I think, your meaning is good, and so far you are pardonable.

If you will propose a general contribution for supporting the poor in potatoes and buttermilk, till the new corn comes in, perhaps you may succeed better; because the thing at least is possible: and I think if our brethren in England, would contribute upon this emergency, out of the million they gain from us every year, they would do a piece of justice as well as charity. In the mean time, go and preach to your own tenants, to fall to the plough as fast as they can; and prevail with your neighbouring squires, to do the same with theirs; or else die with the guilt of having driven away half the inhabitants, and starving the rest. For as to your scheme of raising one hundred and ten thousand pounds, it is as vain as that of Rabelais; which was to squeeze out wind, from the posteriours of a dead ass.

But, why all this concern for the poor? We want them not as the country is now managed; they may follow thousands of their leaders, and seek their bread abroad. Where the plough has no work, one family can do the business of fifty, and you may send away the other forty-nine. An admirable piece of husbandry, never known or practised by the wisest nations, who erroneously thought people to be the riches of a country!

If so wretched a state of things would allow it, methinks I could have a malicious pleasure, after all the warning I have in vain given the publick, at my own peril, for several years past, to see the consequences and events answering in every particular. I pretend to no sagacity: what I writ was little more than what I had discoursed to several persons, who were generally of my opinion: and it was obvious to every common understanding, that such effects must needs follow from such causes. A fair issue of things begun upon party rage, while some sacrificed the publick to fury, and others to ambition: while a spirit of faction and oppression reigned in every part of the country, where gentlemen, instead of consulting the ease of their tenants, or cultivating their lands, were worrying one another upon points of whig and tory, of high church and low church; which no more concerned them than the long and famous controversy of strops for razors: while agriculture was wholly discouraged, and consequently half the farmers and labourers, and poorer tradesmen, forced to beggary or banishment. "Wis-
"dom crieth in the streets; because I have called
"on you; I have stretched out my hand, and no
"man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my
"counsels,

" counsels, and would none of my reproof. I also " will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your " fear cometh."

I have now done with your memorial, and freely excuse your mistakes, since you appear to write as a stranger, and as of a country which is left at liberty to enjoy the benefits of nature, and to make the best of those advantages which God has given it, in soil, climate, and situation.

But having lately sent out a paper, entitled, A Short View of the State of Ireland; and hearing of an objection, that some people think I have treated the memory of the late lord chief justice Whitshed with an appearance of severity: since I may not probably have another opportunity of explaining myself in that particular, I choose to do it here: laying it therefore down for a postulatum, which I suppose will be universally granted, that no little creature of so mean a birth and genius, had ever the honour to be a greater enemy to his country, and to all kinds of virtue than HE, I answer thus; whether there be two different goddesses called Fame, as some authors contend, or only one goddess sounding two different trumpets, it is certain, that people distinguished for their villany, have as good a title to a blast from the proper trumpet, as those who are most renowned for their virtues, have from the other; and have equal reason to complain if it be refused them. And accordingly the names of the most celebrated profligates, have been faithfully transmitted down to posterity. And although the person here understood, acted his part in an obscure corner of the world, yet his talents might have shone with lustre enough, in the noblest scene.

As

As to my naming a person dead, the plain honest reason is the best. He was armed with power and will to do mischief, even where he was not provoked; as appeared by his prosecuting two printers*, one to death, and both to ruin, who had neither offended God, nor the king, nor him, nor the publick.

What an encouragement to vice is this? If an ill man be alive, and in power, we dare not attack him; and if he be weary of the world, or of his own villanies, he has nothing to do but die, and then his reputation is safe. For, these excellent casuists know just Latin enough to have heard a most foolish precept, that *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*; so that if Socrates, and Anytus his accuser, had happened to die together, the charity of survivors, must either have obliged them to hold their peace, or to fix the same character on both. The only crime of charging the dead is, when the least doubt remains whether the accusation be true; but when men are openly abandoned, and lost to all shame, they have no reason to think it hard, if their memory be reproached. Whoever reports, or otherwise publishes, any thing which it is possible may be false, that man is a slanderer; *hic niger est, hunc tu, Romane, caveto.* Even the least misrepresentation, or aggravation of facts, deserves the same censure in some degree: but in this case I am quite deceived, if my errour has not been on the side of extenuation.

I have now present before me the idea of some persons (I know not in what part of the world) who spend every moment of their lives, and every turn

* Edward Waters and John Harding.

of

of their thoughts while they are awake (and probably of their dreams while they sleep) in the most detestable actions and designs; who delight in mischief, scandal, and obloquy, with the hatred and contempt of all mankind against them; but chiefly of those among their own party, and their own family; such, whose odious qualities rival each other for perfection; avarice, brutality, faction, pride, malice, treachery, noise, impudence, dulness, ignorance, vanity, and revenge, contending every moment for superiority in their breasts. Such creatures are not to be reformed; neither is it prudent, or safe to attempt a reformation. Yet, although their memories will rot, there may be some benefit for their survivors, to smell it while it is rotting.

I am, SIR,

Your humble servant,

A. B.

Dublin, March 25, 1728.

A

VINDICATION

OF HIS EXCELLENCY

JOHN, LORD CARTERET,

FROM THE

CHARGE OF FAVOURING NONE BUT TORIES, HIGH CHURCHMEN, AND JACOBITES.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1730.

IN order to treat this important subject with the greatest fairness and impartiality, perhaps it may be convenient to give some account of his excellency; in whose life and character there are certain particulars, which might give a very just suspicion of some truth in the accusation he lies under.

He is descended from two noble, ancient, and most loyal families, the Carterets, and the Granvilles: too much distinguished, I confess, for what they acted, and what they suffered in defending the former constitution in church and state, under king Charles the martyr; I mean that very prince, on account of whose martyrdom a form of prayer, with fasting, was enjoined by act of parliament to be used

on

on the 30th day of January every year, to implore the mercies of God, that the guilt of that sacred and innocent blood, might not be visited on us or our posterity; as we may read at large in our Common Prayer Books; which day has been solemnly kept, even within the memory of many men now alive.

His excellency, the present lord, was educated in the university of Oxford; from whence, with a singularity scarce to be justified, he carried away more Greek, Latin, and philosophy, than properly became a person of his rank; indeed much more of each, than most of those who are forced to live by their learning, will be at the unnecessary pains to load their heads with.

This was the rock he split on, upon his first appearance in the world, and having just got clear of his guardians. For, as soon as he came to town, some bishops and clergymen, and other persons most eminent for learning and parts, got him among them; from whom although he were fortunately dragged by a lady and the court, yet he could never wipe off the stain, nor wash out the tincture of his university acquirements and dispositions.

To this another misfortune was added, that it pleased God to endow him with great natural talents, memory, judgment, comprehension, eloquence, and wit: and, to finish the work, all these were fortified even in his youth with the advantages received by such employments, as are best fitted both to exercise, and polish, the gifts of nature and education, having been ambassador in several courts, when his age would hardly allow him to take a degree; and made principal secretary of state, at a period, when, according

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ing to custom, he ought to have been busied in losing his money at a chocolate-house, or in other amusements, equally laudable and epidemick, among persons of honour.

I cannot omit another weak side in his excellency. For it is known, and can be proved upon him, that Greek and Latin books might be found every day in his dressing room, if it were carefully searched; and there is reason to suspect, that some of the said books have been privately conveyed to him by tory hands. I am likewise assured, that he has been taken in the very fact of reading the said books, even in the midst of a session, to the great neglect of publick affairs.

I own, there may be some grounds for this charge; because I have it from good hands, that when his excellency is at dinner with one or two scholars at his elbows, he grows a most unsupportable and unintelligible companion, to all the fine gentlemen round the table.

I cannot deny, that his excellency lies under another very great disadvantage. For, with all the accomplishments abovementioned, adding that of a most comely and graceful person, and during the prime of youth, spirits, and vigour, he has in a most unexemplary manner led a regular domestick life; discovers a great esteem, and friendship, and love for his lady, as well as true affection for his children; and when he is disposed to admit an entertaining evening companion, he does not always enough reflect, whether the person may possibly in former days have lain under the imputation of a tory; nor at such times do the natural, or affected

fears

fears of popery and the pretender, make any part of the conversation: I presume, because neither Homer, Plato, Aristotle, nor Cicero, have made any mention of them.

These I freely acknowledge to be his excellency's failings: yet, I think it is agreed by philosophers and divines, that some allowance ought to be given to human infirmity, and to the prejudices of a wrong education.

I am well aware, how much my sentiments differ, from the orthodox opinions of one or two principal patriots, at the head of whom I name with honour Pistorides; for these have decided the matter directly against me, by declaring, that no person, who was ever known to lie under the suspicion of one single tory principle, or who had been once seen at a great man's levee in the worst of times*, should be allowed to come within the verge of the castle; much less to bow in the antichamber, appear at the assemblies, or dance at a birthnight. However, I dare assert that this maxim has been often controlled; and that on the contrary, a considerable number of early penitents have been received into grace, who are now an ornament, happiness, and support to the nation.

Neither do I find any murmuring on some other points of greater importance, where this favourite maxim is not so strictly observed.

To instance only in one. I have not heard that any care has hitherto been taken to discover whe-

* The four last years of queen Anne, when lord Oxford was minister, were so called by the whigs.

ther

ther madam Violante* be a whig or tory in her principles; or even that she has ever been offered the oaths to the government: on the contrary, I am told, that she openly professes herself to be a highflyer; and it is not improbable, by her outlandish name, she may also be a papist in her heart; yet we see this illustrious and dangerous female, openly caressed by principal persons of both parties; who contribute to support her in a splendid manner, without the least apprehensions from a grand jury, or even from squire Hartley Hutcheson himself, that zealous prosecutor of hawkers and libels. And, as Hobbes wisely observes, so much money being equivalent to so much power, it may deserve considering, with what safety such an instrument of power ought to be trusted in the hands of an alien, who has not given any legal security for her good affection to the government.

I confess, there is one evil which I could wish our friends would thing proper to redress. There are many whigs in this kingdom of the old fashioned stamp, of whom we might make very good use. They bear the same loyalty with us to the Hanoverian family, in the person of king George the IId; the same abhorrence of the pretender, with the consequences of popery and slavery; and the same indulgence to tender consciences: but having nothing to ask for themselves, and therefore the more leisure to think for the publick, they are often apt to entertain fears, and melancholy prospects, concerning the state of their country, the decay of trade, the want of

* A famous Italian ropedancer.

money,

money, the miserable condition of the people, with other topicks of the like nature; all which do equally concern both whig and tory; who, if they have any thing to lose, must be equally sufferers. Perhaps, one or two of these melancholy gentlemen, will sometimes venture to publish their thoughts in print: now I can by no means approve our usual custom of cursing and railing at this species of thinkers, under the names of tories, jacobites, papists, libellers, rebels, and the like.

This was the utter ruin of that poor, angry, bustling, well meaning mortal Pistorides; who lies equally under the contempt of both parties; with no other difference than a mixture of pity on one side, and of aversion on the other.

How has he been pelted, pestered, and pounded by one single wag, who promises never to forsake him, living or dead!

I was much pleased with the humour of a surgeon in this town; who having, in his own apprehension, received some great injustice from the earl of Galway, and despairing of revenge as well as relief, declared to all his friends, that he had set apart one hundred guineas, to purchase the earl's carcase from the sexton, whenever it should die, to make a skeleton of the bones, stuff the hide, and show them for threepence; and thus get vengeance for the injuries he had suffered by its owner.

Of the like spirit too often is that implacable race of wits; against whom there is no defence but innocence and philosophy, neither of which is likely to be at hand; and therefore the wounded have no where to fly for a cure, but to downright stupidity,

a crazed head, or a profligate contempt of guilt and shame.

I am therefore sorry for that other miserable creature Traulus; who, although of somewhat a different species, yet seems very far to outdo even the genius of Pistorides, in that miscarrying talent of railing without consistency, or discretion, against the most innocent persons, according to the present situation of his gall and spleen. I do not blame an honest gentleman, for the bitterest invectives against one, to whom he professes the greatest friendship, provided he acts in the dark so as not to be discovered: but in the midst of caresses, visits, and invitations, to run into the streets, or to as publick a place, and without the least pretended incitement, sputter out the basest and falsest accusations, then to wipe his mouth, come up smiling to his friend, shake him by the hand, and tell him in a whisper it was all for his service: this proceeding I am bold to think a great failure in prudence: and I am afraid lest such a practitioner, with a body so open, so foul, and so full of sores, may fall under the resentment of an incensed political surgeon, who is not in much renown for his mercy, upon great provocations: who, without waiting for his death, will flay and dissect him alive; and to the view of mankind lay open all the disordered cells of his brain, the venom of his tongue, the corruption of his heart, and spots and flatuses of his spleen: and all this for threepence.

In such a case what a scene would be laid open! and, to drop my metaphor, what a character of our mistaking friend might an angry enemy draw and expose!

expose! particularizing that unnatural conjunction of vices and follies, so inconsistent with each other in the same breast: furious and fawning, scurrilous and flattering, cowardly and provoking, insolent and abject; most profligately false, with the strongest professions of sincerity; positive and variable, tyrannical and slavish.

I apprehend, that if all this should be set out to the world, by an angry whig of the old stamp, the unavoidable consequence must be, a confinement of our friend for some months more to his garret; and thereby depriving the publick for so long a time, and in so important a juncture, of his useful talents in their service, while he is fed like a wild beast through a hole; but I hope with a special regard to the quantity and quality of his nourishment.

In vain would his excusers endeavour to palliate his enormities, by imputing them to madness; because it is well known, that madness only operates by inflaming and enlarging the good or evil dispositions of the mind. For the curators of Bedlam assure us, that some lunaticks are persons of honour, truth, benevolence, and many other virtues, which appear in their highest ravings, although after a wild incoherent manner; while others, on the contrary, discover in every word and action, the utmost baseness and depravity of human minds; which infallibly they possessed in the same degree, although perhaps under a better regulation, before their entrance into that academy.

But it may be objected, that there is an argument of much force, to excuse the overflowings of that zeal, which our friend shows or means for our cause. And it must be confessed, that the easy and smooth

fluency of his elocution, bestowed on him by nature, and cultivated by continual practice, added to the comeliness of his person, the harmony of his voice, the gracefulness of his manner, and the decency of his dress, are temptations too strong for such a genius to resist, upon any publick occasion of making them appear with universal applause. And if good men are sometimes accused of loving their jest, better than their friend; surely to gain the reputation of the first orator in the kingdom, no man of spirit would scruple to lose all the friends he had in the world.

It is usual for masters to make their boys declaim on both sides of an argument; and as some kinds of assemblies are called the schools of politicks, I confess nothing can better improve political school-boys, than the art of making plausible, or implausible harangues, against the very opinion for which they resolve to determine.

So cardinal Perron, after having spoke for an hour to the admiration of all his hearers to prove the existence of God, told some of his intimates, that he could have spoken another hour, and much better, to prove the contrary.

I have placed this reasoning in the strongest light that I think it will bear; and have nothing to answer, but that allowing it as much weight as the reader shall please, it has constantly met with ill success in the mouth of our friend; but whether for want of good luck, or good management, I suspend my judgment.

To return from this long digression; if persons in high stations have been allowed to choose wenches without regard even to difference in religion, yet never

never incurred the least reflection on their loyalty or their protestantism; shall the chief governor of a great kingdom be censured for choosing a companion, who may formerly have been suspected for differing from the orthodox in some speculative opinions of persons and things, which cannot affect the fundamental principles of a sound whig?

But let me suppose a very possible case. Here is a person sent to govern Ireland, whose unfortunate weak side it happens to be, for several reasons abovementioned, that he has encouraged the attendance of one or two gentlemen distinguished for their taste, their wit, and their learning; who have taken the oaths to his majesty, and pray heartily for him: yet, because they may perhaps be stigmatized as *quondam* tories by Pistorides and his gang, his excellency must be forced to banish them, under the pain and peril of displeasing the zealots of his own party; and thereby be put into a worse condition than every common good fellow, who may be a sincere protestant and a loyal subject, and yet rather choose to drink fine ale at the pope's head, than muddy at the king's.

Let me then return to my suppositions. It is certain, the highflown loyalists, in the present sense of the word, have their thoughts, and studies, and tongues, so entirely diverted by political schemes, that the zeal of their principles has eaten up their understandings; neither have they time from their employments, their hopes, and their hourly labours, for acquiring new additions of merit, to amuse themselves with philological converse or speculations, which are utterly ruinous to all schemes of rising in the world. What then must a great man do, whose

ill stars have fatally perverted him to a love, and taste, and possession of literature, politeness, and good sense? Our thoroughsped republick of whigs, which contains the bulk of all hopers, pretenders, expecters, and professors, are beyond all doubt most highly useful to princes, to governors, to great ministers, and to their country; but at the same time, and by necessary consequence, the most disagreeable companions to all who have that unfortunate turn of mind peculiar to his excellency, and perhaps to five or six more in a nation.

I do not deny it possible, that an original or proselyte favourite of the times, might have been born to those useless talents, which in former ages qualified a man to be a poet or a philosopher. All I contend for is, that where the true genius of party once enters, it sweeps the house clean, and leaves room for many other spirits to take joint possession, until the last state of that man is exceedingly better than the first.

I allow it a great errour in his excellency, that he adheres so obstinately to his old unfashionable academick education; yet so perverse is human nature, that the usual remedies for this evil in others, have produced a contrary effect in him; to a degree, that I am credibly informed, he will, as I have already hinted, in the middle of a session, quote passages out of Plato and Pindar at his own table to some booklearned companion without blushing, even when persons of great stations are by.

I will venture one step farther; which is, freely to confess, that this mistaken method of educating youth in the knowledge of ancient learning and language, is too apt to spoil their politicks and principles;

ples; because the doctrine and examples of the books they read, teach them lessons directly contrary in every point to the present practice of the world: and accordingly Hobbes most judiciously observes, that the writings of the Greeks and Romans, made young men imbibe opinions against absolute power in a prince, or even in a first minister, and embrace notions of liberty and property.

It has been therefore a great felicity in these kingdoms, that the heirs to titles and large estates, have a weakness in their eyes, a tenderness in their constitutions; are not able to bear the pain and indignity of whipping; and as the mother rightly expresses it, could never take to their books, yet are well enough qualified to sign a receipt for half a year's rent, to put their names (rightly spelt) to a warrant, and to read pamphlets against religion and highflying; whereby they fill their niches, and carry themselves through the world with that dignity which best becomes a senator and a 'squire.

I could heartily wish his excellency would be more condescending to the genius of the kingdom he governs; to the condition of the times, and to the nature of the station he fills. Yet if it be true, what I have read in old English storybooks, that one Agesilaus (no matter to the bulk of my readers whether I spell the name right or wrong) was caught by the parson of the parish riding on a hobbyhorse with his children; that Socrates a heathen philosopher was found dancing by himself at fourscore; that a king called Cæsar Augustus (or some such name) used to play with boys, whereof some might possibly be sons of tories; and that two great men called Scipio and Lælius, (I forget their christian names,

and whether they were poets or generals) often played at duck and drake with smooth stones on a river: Now I say, if these facts be true (and the book where I found them is in print) I cannot imagine why our most zealous patriots may not a little indulge his excellency in an infirmity, which is not morally evil; provided he gives no publick scandal; which is by all means to be avoided: I say, why he may not be indulged twice a week to converse with one or two particular persons; and let him and them con over their old exploded readings together, after mornings spent in hearing and prescribing ways and means from and to his most obedient politicians for the welfare of the kingdom; although the said particular person, or persons, may not have made so publick a declaration of their political faith in all its parts, as the business of the nation requires: still submitting my opinion to that happy majority, which I am confident is always in the right; by whom the liberty of the subject has been so frequently, so strenuously, and so successfully asserted; who, by their wise counsels, have made commerce to flourish, money to abound, inhabitants to increase, the value of lands and rents to rise; and the whole island put on a new face of plenty and prosperity.

But, in order to clear his excellency more fully from this accusation of showing his favours to high-fliers, tories, and jacobites, it will be necessary to come to particulars.

The first person of a tory denomination, to whom his excellency gave any marks of his favour, was doctor Thomas Sheridan. It is to be observed, that this happened so early in his excellency's government, as it may be justly supposed he had not been informed

informed of that gentleman's character upon so dangerous an article. The doctor being well known, and distinguished for his skill and success in the education of youth, beyond most of his profession for many years past, was recommended to his excellency on the score of his learning, and particularly for his knowledge in the Greek tongue; whereof, it seems, his excellency is a great admirer, although for what reasons I could never imagine. However, it is agreed on all hands, that his lordship was too easily prevailed on by the doctor's request, or indeed rather from the bias of his own nature, to hear a tragedy acted in that unknown language by the doctor's lads, which was written by some heathen author; but whether it contained any tory or high church principles, must be left to the consciences of the boys, the doctor, and his excellency; the only witnesses in this case, whose testimonies can be depended upon.

It seems, his excellency (a thing never to be sufficiently wondered at) was so pleased with his entertainment, that some time after he gave the doctor a church living to the value of almost one hundred pounds a year, and made him one of his chaplains; from an antiquated notion that good schoolmasters ought to be encouraged in every nation professing civility and religion. Yet his excellency did not venture to make this bold step without strong recommendations from persons of undoubted principles fitted to the times; who thought themselves bound in justice, honour, and gratitude, to do the doctor a good office, in return for the care he had taken of their children, or of those of their friends. Yet the catastrophe was terrible; for the doctor, in the height of his felicity

and

and gratitude, going down to take possession of his parish, and furnished with a few led sermons, whereof as it is to be supposed the number was very small, having never served a cure in the church, he stopped at Cork to attend on his bishop; and going to church on the Sunday following, was, according to the usual civility of country clergymen, invited by the minister of the parish to supply the pulpit. It happened to be the first of August; and the first of August happened that year to light upon a Sunday: and it happened that the doctor's text was in these words; Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*; and lastly, it happened that some one person of the congregation, whose loyalty made him watchful upon every appearance of danger to his majesty's person and government, when service was over, gave the alarm. Notice was immediately sent up to town; and by the zeal of one man of no large dimensions of body or mind, such a clamour was raised, that we in Dublin could apprehend no less than an invasion by the pretender, who must be landed in the south. The result was, that the doctor must be struck out of the chaplains list, and appear no more at the castle; yet whether he were then, or be at this day, a whig or a tory, I think is a secret; only it is manifest, that he is a zealous Hanoverian at least in poetry, and a great admirer of the present royal family through all its branches. His friends likewise assert, that he had preached this sermon often under the same text; that not having observed the words, till he was in the pulpit, and had opened his notes, as he is a person a little abstracted, he wanted pre-

* The first of August is the anniversary of the Hanoverian family's accession to the crown of Great Britain.

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sence of mind to change them: and that in the whole sermon there was not a syllable relating to government or party, or to the subject of the day.

In this incident there seems to have been a union of events, that will probably never happen again to the end of the world; or is, at least, like the grand conjunction in the heavens; which, I think, they say can arrive but once in twenty thousand years.

The second gentleman (if I am right in my chronology) who, under the suspicion of a tory, received some favour from his excellency, is Mr. James Stopford; very strongly recommended by the most eminent whig in England, on the account of his learning and virtue, and other accomplishments. He had passed the greatest part of his youth in close study, or in travelling, and was either not at home, or not at leisure to trouble his thoughts about party; which I allow to be a great omission, although I cannot honestly place him in the list of tories: and therefore think his excellency may be fairly acquitted for making him vicar of Finglass, worth about one hundred pounds a year.

The third is doctor Patrick Delany. This divine lies under some disadvantage; having in his youth received many civilities from a certain* person, then in a very high station here; for which reason I doubt the doctor never drank his confusion since; and what makes the matter desperate, it is now too late; unless our inquisitors will be content with drinking confusion to his memory. The aforesaid eminent person, who was a judge of all merit, except that of party, distinguished the doctor among other ju-

* Sir Constantine Phipps, lord chancellor of Ireland when queen died.

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niors in our university, for his learning, virtue, discretion, and good sense. But the doctor was then in too good a situation at his college, to hope, or endeavour at a better establishment, from one who had no power to give it him.

Upon the present lord lieutenant's coming over, the doctor was named to his excellency by a friend* among other clergy of distinction, as persons whose characters it was proper his excellency should know; and by the truth of which the giver would be content to stand or fall in his excellency's opinion; since not one of those persons were in particular friendship with the gentleman who gave in their names. By this, and some other incidents, particularly the recommendation of the late archbishop of Dublin, the doctor became known to his excellency; whose fatal turn of mind toward heathenish and outlandish books and languages, finding, as I conceive, a like disposition in the doctor, was the cause of his becoming so domestick, as we are told he is, at the castle of Dublin.

Three or four years ago, the doctor grown weary of an academick life, for some reasons best known to the managers of the discipline in that learned society (which it may not be for their honour to mention) resolved to leave it; although, by the benefit of the pupils, and his senior fellowship, with all its perquisites, he received every year between nine hundred and a thousand pounds. And a small northern living, in the university's donation, of somewhat better than one hundred pounds a year falling at the same time with the chancellorship of Christchurch, to about equal the value, in the gift of his

* The author.

excellency;

excellency; the doctor ventured into the world in a very scanty condition; having squandered away all his annual income in a manner which, although perhaps proper enough for a clergyman without a family, will not be for the advantage of his character to discover, either on the exchange or at a banker's shop.

About two months ago, his excellency gave the doctor a prebend in St. Patrick's cathedral; which being of near the same value with either of the two former, will add a third part to his revenues, after he shall have paid the great encumbrances upon it: so that he may now be said to possess of church preferments in scattered tithes three hundred pounds a year; instead of the like sum of infallible rents from a senior fellowship, with the offices annexed; beside the advantage of a free lodging, a great number of pupils, and some other easements.

But since the doctor has not, in any of his writings, his sermons, his actions, his discourse, or his company, discovered one single principle of either whig or tory; and that the lord lieutenant still continues to admit him; I shall boldly pronounce him ONE OF US: but, like a new freemason, who has not yet learned all the dialect of the mystery. Neither can he justly be accused of any tory doctrines; except perhaps some among those few, with which that wicked party was charged during the height of their power, but have been since transferred, for the most solid reasons, to the whole body of our firmest friends.

I have now done with the clergy: and upon the strictest examination, have not been able to find above one of that order, against whom any party suspicion can lie; I mean the unfortunate gentleman doctor Sheridan,

Sheridan, who, by mere chance-medley, shot his own fortune dead with a single text.

As to the laity, I can hear of but one person of the tory stamp, who, since the beginning of his excellency's government, did ever receive any solid mark of his favour: I mean sir Arthur Acheson, reported to be an acknowledged tory; and what is almost as bad, a scholar into the bargain. It is whispered about, as a certain truth, that this gentleman is to have a grant of a certain barrack upon his estate within two miles of his own house; for which the crown is to be his tenant, at the rent of sixty pounds per annum; he being only at the expense of about five hundred pounds, to put the house in repair, build stables, and other necessaries. I will place this invidious mark of beneficence conferred on a tory in a fair light, by computing the costs and necessary defalcations: after which it may be seen how much sir Arthur will be annually a clear gainer by the publick: notwithstanding his unfortunate principles, and his knowledge in Greek and Latin.

For repairs, &c. 500l. the interest whereof per ann.	30 0 0
For all manner of poultry to furnish the troopers, but which the said troopers must be at the labour of catching, valued per ann. - -	5 0 0
For straggling sheep - -	8 0 0
For game destroyed five miles round	6 0 0
	49 0 0
Rent paid to sir Arthur -	60 0 0
Deduct - -	49 0 0
Remains clear - -	11 0 0

Thus,

Thus, if sir Arthur Acheson shall have the good fortune to obtain a grant of this barrack, he will receive net profit annually from the crown ELEVEN pounds sterling, to help him in entertaining the officers, and making provisions for his younger children.

It is true, there is another advantage to be expected, which may fully compensate the loss of cattle and poultry; by multiplying the breed of mankind, and particularly that of good protestants, in a part of the kingdom, half depopulated by the wild humour among the farmers there, of leaving their country. But I am not so skilful in arithmetick, as to compute the value.

I have reckoned one per cent below the legal interest for the money that sir Arthur must expend; and valued the damage in the other articles very moderately. However, I am confident he may with good management be a saver at least; which is a prodigious instance of moderation in our friends toward a professed tory: whatever merit he may pretend, by the unwillingness he has shown to make his excellency uneasy in his administration.

Thus I have, with the utmost impartiality, collected every single favour (farther than personal civilities) conferred by his excellency on tories, and reputed tories, since his first arrival here, to the 30th day of April in the year of our Lord 1730, giving all allowance possible to the arguments on the other side of the question: and the account will stand thus:

Disposed of preferments and employments to tories, or reputed tories, by his excellency John, lord Carteret,

teret, lord lieutenant of Ireland, in about the space of six years:

To doctor Thomas Sheridan, in a rectory near Kinsale, per annum	100	0	0
To sir Arthur Acheson, baronet, a barrack, per ann.	11	0	0
	111	0	0

Give me leave now to compute, in gross the value of the favours done by his excellency to the true friends of their king and country, and of the protestant religion.

It is to be remembered, that although his excellency cannot be properly said to bestow bishopricks, commands in the army, the place of a judge, or commissioner in the revenue, and some others; yet they are for the most part disposed upon his recommendation, except where the persons are immediately sent from England by their interest at court; for which I have allowed great defalcations in the following accounts. And it is remarkable, that the only considerable station conferred on a tory since his present excellency's government, was of this latter kind.

And indeed it is but too notorious, that in a neighbouring nation (where this dangerous denomination of men is incomparably more numerous, more powerful, and of consequence more formidable) real tories can often with much less difficulty obtain very high favours from the government, than their

their reputed brethren can arrive to the lowest in ours. I observe this with all possible submission to the wisdom of their policy; which however will not, I believe, dispute the praise of vigilance with ours.

WHIG account.

To persons promoted to bishopricks, or removed to more beneficial ones, computed per ann.	10050 0 0
To civil employments	9030 0 0
To military commands	8436 0 0
	27516 0 0

TORY account.

To tories	111 0 0
Balance	27405 0 0

I shall conclude with this observation, that as I think the tories have sufficient reason to be fully satisfied with the share of trust, power, and employments, which they possess under the lenity of the present government; so, I do not find how his excellency can be justly censured for favouring none but high church, highflyers, termagants, laudists, sacheverellians, tiptopgallonmen, jacobites, tantivies, antihanoverians, friends to popery and the pretender and to arbitrary power, disobligers of England, breakers of DEPENDENCY, inflamers of quarrels between the two nations, publick incendiaries, enemies to the king and kingdoms, haters of TRUE

protestants, laurelmen, annists, complainers of the nation's poverty, ormondians, iconoclasts, antiglorious-memorists, antirevolutioners, white-rosalists, tenth-a-junians, and the like; when, by a fair state of the account, the balance, I conceive, seems to lie on the other side.

CONSIDERATIONS

UPON

TWO BILLS

SENT DOWN FROM THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE HOUSE OF LORDS TO THE HONOURABLE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN IRELAND RELATING TO THE CLERGY.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1731.

I HAVE often, for above a month past, desired some few clergymen, who are pleased to visit me, that they would procure an extract of two BILLS, brought into the council by some of the bishops, and both of them since passed in the house of lords: but I could never obtain what I desired, whether by the forgetfulness or negligence of those whom I employed, or the difficulty of the thing itself. Therefore, if I shall happen to mistake in any fact of consequence, I desire my remarks upon it may pass for nothing; for my information is no better than what I received in words from several divines, who seemed to agree with each other. I have not the honour to be acquainted with any one single prelate of the kingdom; and am a stranger to their characters, farther than as common fame reports them, which is

not to be depended on; therefore I cannot be supposed to act upon a principle of resentment. I esteem their functions (if I may be allowed to say so without offence) as truly apostolical, and absolutely necessary to the perfection of a christian church.

There are no qualities more incident to the frailty and corruptions of human kind, than an indifference or insensibility for other men's sufferings, and a sudden forgetfulness of their own former humble state, when they rise in the world. These two dispositions have not, I think, any where so strongly exerted themselves, as in the order of bishops with regard to the inferiour clergy; for which I can find no reasons, but such as naturally should seem to operate a quite contrary way. The maintenance of the clergy throughout the kingdom, is precarious and uncertain, collected from a most miserable race of beggarly farmers; at whose mercy every minister lies to be defrauded. His office as rector or vicar, if it be duly executed, is very laborious. As soon as he is promoted to a bishoprick, the scene is entirely and happily changed; his revenues are large, and as surely paid as those of the king; his whole business is, once a year to receive the attendance, the submission, and the proxy money of all his clergy, in whatever part of the diocese he shall please to think most convenient for himself. Neither is his personal presence necessary, for the business may be done by a vicar general. The fatigue of ordination, is just what the bishops please to make it; and as matters have been for some time, and may probably remain, the fewer ordinations the better. The rest of their visible office consists, in the honour of attending parliaments and councils, and bestowing preferments

ments in their own gifts; in which last employment, and in their spiritual and temporal courts, the labour falls to their vicars general, secretaries, proctors, apparitors, seneschals, and the like. Now, I say, in so quick a change, whereby their brethren in a few days are become their subjects, it would be reasonable at least to hope that the labour, confinement, and subjection, from which they have so lately escaped, like a bird out of the snare of the fowler, might a little incline them to remember the condition of those, who were but last week their equals, probably their companions or their friends, and possibly as reasonable expectants. There is a known story of colonel Tidcomb, who, while he continued a subaltern officer, was every day complaining against the pride, oppression, and hard treatment of colonels toward their officers; yet in a very few minutes after he had received his commission for a regiment, walking with a friend on the mall, he confessed that the spirit of colonelship was coming fast upon him; which spirit is said to have daily increased to the hour of his death.

It is true, the clergy of this kingdom, who are promoted to bishopricks, have always some great advantages; either that of rich deaneries, opulent and multiplied rectories and dignities, strong alliances by birth or marriage, fortified by a superlative degree of zeal and loyalty: but however, they were all at first no more than young beginners; and before their great promotion, were known by their plain Christian names among their old companions, the middling rate of clergymen; nor could therefore be strangers to their condition, or with any good grace forget it so soon, as it has too often happened.

I confess, I do not remember to have observed any body of men acting with so little concert, as our clergy have done, in a point, where their opinions appeared to be unanimous: a point, wherein their whole temporal support was concerned, as well as their power of serving God and his church, in their spiritual functions. This has been imputed to their fear of disobliging, or hopes of farther favours upon compliance; because it was observed, that some who appeared at first with the greatest zeal, thought fit suddenly to absent themselves from the usual meetings: yet we know what expert solicitors the quakers, the dissenters, and even the papists have sometimes found, to drive a point of advantage, or prevent an impending evil.

I have not seen any extract from the two bills introduced by the bishops into the privy council; where the clergy, upon some failure in favour, or through the timorousness of many among their brethren, were refused to be heard by the council. It seems, these bills were both returned, agreed to by the king and council in England, and the house of lords has with great expedition passed them both; and it is said, they are immediately to be sent down to the commons for their consent.

The particulars, as they have been imperfectly reported to me, are as follow:

By one of the bills, the bishops have power to oblige the country clergy to build a mansion house, upon whatever part of their glebes, their lordships shall command; and if the living be above 50l. a year, the minister is bound to build, after three years, a house that shall cost one years and a half's rent of his income. For instance, if a clergyman

with a wife and seven children gets a living of 55l. per annum, he must, after three years, build a house that shall cost 77l. 10s. and must support his family, during the time the bishop shall appoint for the building of it, with the remainder. But if the living be under 50l. a year, the minister shall be allowed 100l. out of the first-fruits.

But there is said to be one circumstance a little extraordinary; that if there be a single spot in the glebe more barren, more marshy, more exposed to the winds, more distant from the church, or skeleton of a church, or from any conveniency of building; the rector or vicar may be obliged, by the caprice or pique of the bishop, to build, under pain of sequestration (an office which ever falls into the most knavish hands) upon whatever point his lordship shall command; although the farmers have not paid one quarter of his dues.

I believe, under the present distresses of the kingdom (which inevitably without a miracle must increase for ever) there are not ten country clergymen in Ireland, reputed to possess a parish of 100l. per annum, who for some years past have actually received 60l. and that with the utmost difficulty and vexation. I am therefore at a loss what kind of valuators the bishops will make use of; and whether the starving vicar shall be forced to build his house with the money he never received.

The other bill, which passed in two days after the former, is said to concern the division of parishes into as many parcels as the bishop shall think fit, only leaving 300l. a year to the mother church; which 300l. by another act passed some years ago, they can divide likewise, and crumble as low as their

will and pleasure will dispose them. So that instead of six hundred clergymen, which, I think, is the usual computation, we may have in a small compass of years, almost as many thousands to live with decency and comfort, provide for their children, be charitable to the poor, and maintain hospitality.

But it is very reasonable to hope, and heartily to be wished by all those who have the least regard to our holy religion, as hitherto established, or to a learned, pious, diligent, conversable clergyman, or even to common humanity, that the honourable house of commons will, in their great wisdom, justice, and tenderness to innocent men, consider these bills in another light. It is said they well know this kingdom not to be so overstocked with neighbouring gentry, but a discreet learned clergyman, with a competency fit for one of his education, may be an entertaining, a useful, and sometimes a necessary companion. That, although such a clergyman may not be able constantly to find beef and wine for his own family, yet he may be allowed sometimes to afford both to a neighbour without distressing himself; and the rather, because he may expect at least as good a return. It will probably be considered, that in many desolate parts, there may not be always a sufficient number of persons, considerable enough to be trusted with commissions of the peace, which several of the clergy now supply, much better than a little, hedge, contemptible, illiterate vicar from twenty to fifty pounds a year, the son of a weaver, pedlar, tailor, or miller, can be presumed to do.

The landlords and farmers, by this scheme, can find no profit, but will certainly be losers. For instance,

instance, if the large northern livings be split into a dozen parishes or more, it will be very necessary for the little threadbare gownman, with his wife, his proctor, and every child who can crawl, to watch the fields at harvest time, for fear of losing a single sheaf, which he could not afford under peril of a day's starving: for, according to the Scotch proverb, a hungry louse bites sore. This would, of necessity, breed an infinite number of wrangles and litigious suits in the spiritual courts; and put the wretched pastor at perpetual variance with his whole parish. But, as they have hitherto stood, a clergyman established in a competent living, is not under the necessity of being so sharp, vigilant, and exacting. On the contrary, it is well known and allowed, that the clergy, round the kingdom, think themselves well treated, if they lose only one single third of their legal demands.

The honourable house may perhaps be inclined to conceive, that my lords the bishops enjoy as ample a power, both spiritual and temporal, as will fully suffice to answer every branch of their office; that they want no laws to regulate the conduct of those clergymen over whom they preside; that if non-residence be a grievance, it is the patron's fault, who makes not a better choice, or caused the plurality. That if the general impartial character of persons chosen into the church, had been more regarded, and the motive of party, alliance, kindred, flatterers, ill judgment, or personal favour, regarded less, there would be fewer complaints of non-residence, want of care, blamable behaviour, or any other part of misconduct; not to mention ignorance and stupidity.

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cation; no more of either, than what a poor hungry servitor can be expected to bring with him from his college. It would be tedious to show the reverse of all this, in our distant poorer parishes through most parts of Ireland, wherein every reader may make the comparison.

Lastly, the honourable house of commons may consider, whether the scheme of multiplying beggarly clergymen through the whole kingdom, who must all have votes for choosing parliament men (provided they can prove their freeholds to be worth 40s. per annum, *ultra reprisas)* may not, by their numbers, have great influence upon elections; being entirely under the dependence of their bishops. For, by a moderate computation, after all the divisions and subdivisions of parishes, that my lords the bishops have power to make by their new laws, there will, as soon as the present set of clergy goes off, be raised an army of ecclesiastical militants, able enough for any kind of service except that of the altar.

I am indeed in some concern about a fund for building a thousand or two churches, wherein these probationers may read their wall lectures; and begin to doubt they must be contented with barns; which barns, will be one great advancing step, toward an accommodation with our true protestant brethren, the dissenters.

The scheme of encouraging clergymen to build houses, by dividing a living of 500l. a year into ten parts, is a contrivance, the meaning whereof has got on the wrong side of my comprehension; unless it may be argued, that bishops build no houses because they are so rich; and therefore the inferiour clergy will

will certainly build, if you reduce them to beggary. But I knew a very rich man of quality in England, who could never be persuaded to keep a servant out of livery; because such servants would be expensive, and apt in time to look like gentlemen: whereas the others were ready to submit to the basest offices, and at a cheaper pennyworth might increase his retinue.

I hear, it is the opinion of many wise men, that before these bills pass both houses, they should be sent back to England, with the following clauses inserted.

First, that whereas there may be about a dozen double bishopricks in Ireland, those bishopricks should be split and given to different persons; and those of a single denomination be also divided into two, three, or four parts, as occasion shall require; otherwise there may be a question started, whether twenty-two prelates can effectually extend their paternal care, and unlimited power, for the protection and correction of so great a number of spiritual subjects. But this proposal will meet with such furious objections, that I shall not insist upon it: for I well remember to have read, what a terrible fright the frogs were in, upon a report that the sun was going to marry.

Another clause should be, that none of these twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty pounders may be suffered to marry, under the penalty of immediate deprivation; their marriages declared null, and their children bastards: for some desponding people, take the kingdom to be in no condition of encouraging so numerous a breed of beggars.

A third clause will be necessary, that these humble gentry,

gentry, should be absolutely disqualified from giving votes in elections for parliament men.

Others add a fourth; which is, a clause of indulgence, that these reduced divines may be permitted to follow any lawful ways of living, which will not call them too often or too far from their spiritual offices; for, unless I misapprehend, they are supposed to have episcopal ordination. For example; they may be lappers of linen, bailiffs of the manor; they may let blood or apply plasters for three miles round: they may get a dispensation to hold the clerkship and sextonship of their own parish *in commendam*. Their wives and daughters may make shirts for the neighbourhood; or, if a barrack be near, for the soldiers: in linen countries they may card and spin, and keep a few looms in the house: they may let lodgings, and sell a pot of ale without doors, but not at home unless to sober company, and at regular hours. It is by some thought a little hard, that in an affair of the last consequence to the very being of the clergy in the points of liberty and property, as well as in their abilities to perform their duty, this whole reverend body, who are the established instructors of the nation in christianity and moral virtues, and are the only persons concerned, should be the sole persons not consulted. Let any scholar show the like precedent in christendom, for twelve hundred years past. An act of parliament for settling or selling an estate in a private family, is never passed, until all parties give consent. But in the present case the whole body of the clergy is, as themselves apprehend, determined to utter ruin, without once expecting or asking their opinion; and this by a scheme contrived only by one part of the convocation,

convocation, while the other part, which has been chosen in the usual forms, wants only the regal permission to assemble, and consult about the affairs of the church, as their predecessors have always done in former ages: where it is presumed, the lower house has a power of proposing canons, and a negative voice, as well as the upper. And God forbid (say these objectors) that there should be a real separate interest between the bishops and clergy, any more than there is between a man and his wife, a king and his people, or Christ and his church.

It seems there is a provision in the bill, that no parish shall be cut into scraps without the consent of several persons, who can be no sufferers in the matter; but I cannot find that the clergy lay much weight on this caution; because they argue, that the very persons from whom these bills took their rise, will have the greatest share in the decision.

I do not by any means conceive the crying sin of the clergy in this kingdom to be that of non-residence. I am sure, it is many degrees less so here than in England, unless the possession of pluralities may pass under that name; and if this be a fault, it is well known to whom it must be imputed: I believe, upon a fair inquiry (and I hear an inquiry is to be made) they will appear to be most pardonably few; especially, considering how many parishes have not an inch of glebe, and how difficult it is upon any reasonable terms to find a place of habitation. And therefore, God knows whether my lords the bishops will be soon able to convince the clergy, or those who have any regard for that venerable body, that the chief motive in their lordships minds, by procuring these bills, was,

to

to prevent the sin of non-residence; while the universal opinion of almost every clergyman in the kingdom, without distinction of party, taking in even those who are not likely to be sufferers, stands directly against them.

If some livings in the north may be justly thought too large a compass of land, which makes it inconvenient for the remotest inhabitants to attend the service of the church, which in some instances may be true, no reasonable clergyman would oppose a proper remedy by particular acts of parliament.

Thus, for instance, the deanery of Down, a country deanery I think without a cathedral, depending wholly upon a union of parishes joined together in a time when the land lay waste and thinly inhabited, since those circumstances are so prodigiously changed for the better, may properly be lessened, leaving a decent competency to the dean, and placing rectories in the remaining churches, which are now served only by stipendiary curates.

The case may be probably the same in other parts: and such a proceeding, discreetly managed, would be truly for the good of the church.

For it is to be observed, that the dean and chapter lands, which in England were all seized under the fanatick usurpation, are things unknown in Ireland, having been long ravished from the church by a succession of confusions, and tithes applied in their stead to support that ecclesiastical dignity.

The late archbishop of Dublin* had a very different way of encouraging the clergy of his diocese to residence: when a lease had run out seven year

* The right rev. Dr. WILLIAM KING.

or more, he stipulated with the tenant to resign up twenty or thirty acres to the minister of the parish where it lay convenient, without lessening his former rent, and with no great abatement of the fine; and this he did in the parts near Dublin, where land is at the highest rates, leaving a small chiefry for the minister to pay, hardly a sixth part of the value. I doubt not, that almost every bishop in the kingdom may do the same generous act, with less damage to their sees than his late grace of Dublin; much of whose lands were out in fee farms, or leases for lives; and I am sorry that the good example of such a prelate has not been followed.

But a great majority of the clergy's friends cannot hitherto reconcile themselves to this project; which they call a levelling principle, that must inevitably root out the seeds of all honest emulation, the legal parent of the greatest virtue and most generous actions among men; but which, in the general opinion (for I do not pretend to offer my own) will never more have room to exert itself in the breast of any clergyman whom this kingdom shall produce.

But, whether the consequences of these bills may, by the virtues and frailties of future bishops, sent over hither to rule the church, terminate in good or evil, I shall not presume to determine, since God can work the former out of the latter. However, one thing I can venture to assert; that from the earliest ages of christianity, to the minute I am now writing, there never was a precedent of such a proceeding; much less was it to be feared, hoped, or apprehended, from such hands in any christian country; and so it may pass for more than a phenix;

because it has risen without any assistance from the ashes of its sire.

The appearance of so many dissenters at the hearing of this cause, is what, I am told, has not been charged to the account of their prudence or moderation; because that action has been censured as a mark of triumph and insult before the victory is complete: since neither of these bills has yet passed the house of commons, and some are pleased to think it not impossible that they may be rejected*. Neither do I hear, that there is an enacting clause in either of the bills, to apply any part of the divided or subdivided tithes, toward increasing the stipends of the sectaries. So that these gentlemen seem to be gratified like him, who after having been kicked down stairs, took comfort when he saw his friend kicked down after him.

I have heard many more objections against several particulars of both these bills; but they are of a high nature, and carry such dreadful inuendoes, that I dare not mention them; resolving to give no offence, because I well know how obnoxious I have long been (although I conceive without any fault of my own) to the zeal and principles of those, who place all difference in opinion concerning publick matters, to the score of disaffection; whereof I am at least as innocent as the loudest of my detractors.

Dublin, Feb. 24,
1731-2.

* They were rejected in the house of commons by a great majority.

A PROPOSAL

A

PROPOSAL

FOR AN

ACT OF PARLIAMENT

TO PAY OFF THE DEBT OF THE NATION, WITHOUT TAXING THE SUBJECT:

BY WHICH THE NUMBER OF LANDED GENTRY AND SUBSTANTIAL FARMERS WILL BE CONSIDERABLY INCREASED, AND NO PERSON WILL BE THE POORER, OR CONTRIBUTE ONE FARTHING TO THE CHARGE*.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1732.

THE debts contracted some years past for the service and safety of the nation, are grown so great, that under our present distressed condition, by the want of trade, the great remittances to pay absentees, regiments serving abroad, and many other drains of money well enough known and felt, the kingdom seems altogether unable to discharge them, by the common methods of payment: and either a poll or land tax, would be too odious to think of, especially

* The reader will perceive the following treatise to be altogether ironical.

the latter; because the lands, which have been let for these ten or dozen years past were raised so high, that the owner can at present hardly receive any rent at all. For it is the usual practice of an Irish tenant rather than want land, to offer more for a farm, than he knows he can be ever able to pay; and in that case, he grows desperate, and pays nothing at all. So that a landtax upon a racked estate, would be a burden wholly insupportable.

The question will then be, how these national debts can be paid; and how I can make good the several particulars of my proposal; which I shall now lay open to the publick.

The revenues of their graces and lordships the archbishops and bishops of this kingdom, (excluding the fines) do amount by a moderate computation to 36800l. per ann. I mean the rents which the bishops receive from their tenants. But the real value of those lands at a full rent, taking the several sees one with another, is reckoned to be at least three fourths more; so that multiplying 36800l. by 4, the full rent of all the bishops lands will amount to 147200l. per ann., from which subtracting the present rent received by their lordships, that is 36800l., the profits of the lands received by the first and second tenants (who both have great bargains) will rise to the sum of 110400l., per ann.; which lands, if they were to be sold at twenty-two years purchase, would raise a sum of 2428100l., reserving to the bishops their present rents, only excluding fines.

Of this sum I propose that out of the one half, which amounts to 1214400l., so much be applied, as will entirely discharge the debts of the nation; and

and the remainder be laid up in the treasury, to supply contingencies, as well as to discharge some of our heavy taxes, until the kingdom shall be in a better condition.

But, whereas the present set of bishops would be great losers by this scheme for want of their fines; which would be a hard treatment to such religious, loyal, and deserving personages; I have therefore set apart the other half, to supply that defect, which it will more than sufficiently do.

A bishop's lease for the full term is reckoned to be worth eleven years purchase; but if we take bishops round, I suppose there may be four years of each lease elapsed; and many of the bishops being well stricken in years, I cannot think their lives round to be worth more than seven years purchase; so that the purchasers may very well afford fifteen years purchase for the reversion, especially by one great additional advantage, which I shall soon mention.

This sum of 2428800l. must likewise be sunk very considerably; because the lands are to be sold only at fifteen years purchase, and this lessens the sum to about 1656000l., of which I propose twelve hundred thousand pounds to be applied partly for the payment of the national debt, and partly as a fund for future exigencies; and the remaining, 456000l., I propose as a fund for paying the present set of bishops their fines; which it will abundantly do, and a great part remain as an addition to the publick stock.

Although the bishops round do not in reality receive three fines a piece, which take up 21 years, yet I allow it to be so; but then I will suppose them to

be content to live cheap in a worse country, rather than be at the charge of exchange and agencies; and perhaps of nonsolvencies in absence, if they let their lands too high.

This proposal will also multiply farmers, when the purchasers will have lands in their own power to give long and easy leases to industrious husbandmen.

I have allowed some bishopricks, of equal income, to be of more or less value to the purchaser, according as they are circumstanced. For instance, the lands of the primacy and some other sees, are let so low, that they hardly pay a fifth penny of the real value to the bishop; and there the fines are the greater. On the contrary, the sees of Meath and Clonfert, consisting, as I am told, much of tithes, those tithes are annually let to the tenants without any fines. So the see of Dublin is said to have many fee-farms, which pay no fines; and some leases for lives, which pay very little, and not so soon nor so duly.

I cannot but be confident, that their graces my lords the archbishops, and my lords the bishops, will heartily join in this proposal, out of gratitude to his late and present majesty, the best of kings, who have bestowed on them such high and opulent stations; as well as in pity to this country, which is now become their own; whereby they will be instrumental toward paying the nation's debts without impoverishing themselves; enrich a hundred gentlemen, as well as free them from dependency; and thus remove that envy, which is apt to fall upon their graces and lordships from considerable persons, whose birth and fortunes rather qualify them to be lords of manors, than

than servile dependents upon churchmen, however dignified or distinguished.

If I do not flatter myself, there could not be any law more popular than this. For, the immediate tenants to bishops, being some of them persons of quality and good estates, and more of them grown up to be gentlemen by the profits of these very leases under a succession of bishops, think it a disgrace to be subject both to rents and fines at the pleasure of their landlords. Then the bulk of the tenants, especially the dissenters, who are our true loyal protestant brethren, look upon it both as an unnatural and iniquitous thing, that bishops should be owners of land at all (wherein I beg to differ from them) being a point so contrary to the practice of the apostles, whose successors they are deemed to be; and who, although they were contented that land should be sold for the common use of the brethren, yet would not buy it themselves, but had it laid at their feet to be distributed to poor proselytes.

I will add one word more; that by such a wholesome law all the oppressions felt by undertenants of church leases, which are now laid on the bishops, would entirely be prevented, by their graces and lordships consenting to have their lands sold for payment of the nation's debts; reserving only the present rent for their own plentiful and honourable support.

I beg leave to add one particular; that, when heads of a bill (as I find the style runs in this kingdom) shall be brought in for forming this proposal into a law, I should humbly offer, that there might be a power given to every bishop, except those who reside in Dublin, for applying one hundred acres of

of profitable land, that lies nearest his palace, as demesne for the convenience of his family.

I know very well, that this scheme has been muc talked of for some time past, and is in the thought of many patriots; neither was it properly mine, al though I fell readily into it, when it was first com municated to me.

Although I am almost a perfect stranger in thi kingdom, yet since I have accepted an employmen here of some consequence as well as profit, I cannc but think myself in duty bound to consult the interes of people among whom I have been so well received And if I can be any way instrumental toward con tributing to reduce this excellent proposal into a la (which being not in the least injurious to Englan will, I am confident, meet with no opposition fron that side) my sincere endeavours to serve this churcl and kingdom will be well rewarded.

AN

EXAMINATION

OF

CERTAIN ABUSES, CORRUPTIONS, AND ENORMITIES, IN THE CITY OF DUBLIN.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1732.

NOTHING is held more commendable in all great cities, especially the metropolis of a kingdom, than what the French call the police: by which word is meant the government thereof, to prevent the many disorders occasioned by great numbers of people and carriages especially through narrow streets. In this government our famous city of Dublin is said to be very defective, and universally complained of. Many wholesome laws have been enacted to correct those abuses, but are ill executed; and many more are wanting; which I hope the united wisdom of the nation, (whereof so many good effects have already appeared this session) will soon take into their profound consideration.

As I have been always watchful over the good of mine own country, and particularly that of our renowned city, where *(absit invidia)* I had the honour to draw my first breath; I cannot have a minute's ease or patience, to forbear enumerating some of

of the greatest enormities, abuses, and corruptions, spread almost through every part of Dublin; and proposing such remedies, as I hope the legislature will approve of.

The narrow compass to which I have confined myself in this paper, will allow me only to touch the most important defects; and such as I think seem to require the most speedy redress.

And first; perhaps there was never known a wiser institution, than that of allowing certain persons of both sexes, in large and populous cities, to cry through the streets many necessaries of life: it would be endless to recount the conveniencies, which our city enjoys by this useful invention; and particularly strangers, forced hither by business, who reside here but a short time: for these, having usually but little money, and being wholly ignorant of the town, might at an easy price purchase a tolerable dinner, if the several criers would pronounce the names of the goods they have to sell in any tolerable language. And therefore, until our lawmakers shall think it proper to interpose so far, as to make those traders pronounce their words in such terms, that a plain Christian hearer may comprehend what is cried, I would advise all new comers to look out at their garret windows, and there see, whether the thing that is cried, be tripes or flummery, buttermilk or cow-heels. For, as things are now managed, how is i possible for an honest countryman just arrived to fin out what is meant, for instance, by the followi words, with which his ears are constantly stunn twice a day, mugs, jugs, and porringers up in garret, and down in the cellar; I say, how is it p sible for any stranger to understand, that this jar

is meant as an invitation to buy a farthing's worth of milk for his breakfast or supper, unless his curiosity draws him to the window, or until his landlady shall inform him? I produce this only as one instance, among a hundred much worse; I mean, where the words make a sound wholly inarticulate, which gives so much disturbance, and so little information.

The affirmation solemnly made in the cry of herrings, is directly against all truth and probability; herrings alive, alive here; the very proverb will convince us of this; for what is more frequent in ordinary speech, than to say of some neighbour for whom the passing bell rings, that he is dead as a herring? And pray how is it possible, that a herring, which, as philosophers observe, cannot live longer than one minute three seconds and half out of water, should bear a voyage in open boats from Howth to Dublin, be tossed into twenty hands, and preserve its life in sieves for several hours? nay, we have witnesses ready to produce, that many thousands of these herrings, so impudently asserted to be alive, have been a day and a night upon dry land. But this is not the worst. What can we think of those impious wretches who dare in the face of the sun, vouch the very same affirmative of their salmon, and cry salmon alive, alive; whereas, if you call the woman who cries it, she is not ashamed to turn back her mantle, and show you this individual salmon, cut into a dozen pieces? I have given good advice to these infamous disgracers of their sex and calling, without the least appearance of remorse, and fully against the conviction of their own consciences; I have mentioned this grievance to several of our parish ministers, but all

all in vain; so that it must continue, until the government shall think fit to interpose.

There is another cry, which, from the strictest observation I can make, appears to be very modern, and it is that of sweethearts*; and is plainly intended for a reflection upon the female sex; as if there were at present so great a dearth of lovers, that the women, instead of receiving presents from men, were now forced to offer money to purchase sweethearts. Neither am I sure, that this cry does not glance at some disaffection against the government; insinuating, that while so many of our troops are engaged in foreign service, and such a great number of our gallant officers constantly reside in England, the ladies are forced to take up with parsons and attornies: but this is a most unjust reflection, as may soon be proved by any person who frequents the castle, our publick walks, our balls and assemblies; where the crowds of toupees† were never known to swarm as they do at present.

There is a cry peculiar to this city, which I do not remember to have been used in London; or at least not in the same terms that it has been practised by both parties during each of their power, but very unjustly by the tories. While these were at the helm, they grew daily more and more impatient to put all true whigs and hanoverians out of employments: to effect which, they hired certain ordinary fellows, with large baskets on their shoulders, to call aloud at every house, Dirt to carry out;

* A sort of sugar-cakes in the shape of hearts.

† A new name for a modern periwig with a long black tail, and for its owner; now in fashion, Dec. 1, 1733.

giving

giving that denomination to our whole party; as if they would signify, that the kingdom could never be cleansed, until we were swept from the earth like rubbish. But, since that happy turn of times, when we were so miraculously preserved, by just an inch, from popery, slavery, massacre, and the pretender, I must own it is prudence in us still to go on with the same cry; which has ever since been so effectually observed, that the true political dirt is wholly removed, and thrown on its proper dunghills, there to corrupt and be no more heard of.

But to proceed to other enormities: every person who walks the streets, must needs observe an immense number of human excrements, at the doors and steps of waste houses, and at the sides of every dead wall; for which the disaffected party has assigned a very false and malicious cause: they would have it, that these heaps were laid there privately by British fundaments, to make the world believe that our Irish vulgar do daily eat and drink; and consequently that the clamour of poverty among us, must be false, proceeding only from jacobites and papists. They would confirm this, by pretending to observe, that a British anus, being more narrowly perforated than one of our own country, and many of these excrements, upon a strict view, appearing copple crowned, with a point like a cone or pyramid, are easily distinguished from the Hibernian, which lie much flatter, and with less continuity. I communicated this conjecture to an eminent physician, who is well versed in such profound speculations; and at my request, was pleased to make trial with each of his fingers, by thrusting them into the anus of several persons of both nations, and professed he could find

find no such difference between them, as those ill disposed people allege. On the contrary, he assured me, that much the greater number of narrow cavities, were of Hibernian origin. This I only mention, to show how ready the jacobites are, to lay hold of any handle, to express their malice against the government. I had almost forgot to add, that my friend the physician, could, by smelling each finger, distinguish the Hibernian excrement from the British, and was not above twice mistaken, in a hundred experiments; upon which he intends very soon to publish a learned dissertation.

There is a diversion in this city, which usually begins among the butchers, but is often continued by a succession of other people, through many streets; it is called the COSSING of a dog: and I may justly number it among our corruptions. The ceremony is thus: a strange dog happens to pass through a flesh market; whereupon an expert butcher immediately cries in a loud voice, and the proper tone, coss, coss, several times. The same word is repeated by the people. The dog, who perfectly understands the terms of art, and consequently the danger he is in, immediately flies. The people, and even his own brother animals, pursue: the pursuit and cry attend him perhaps half a mile; he is well worried in his flight, and sometimes hardly escapes. This our ill wishers of the jacobite kind are pleased to call a persecution; and affirm, that it always falls upon dogs of the tory principle. But we can well defend ourselves, by justly alleging, that when they were uppermost, they treated our dogs full as inhumanly. As to my own part, who have in former times often attended these processions, although

though I can very well distinguish between a whig and tory dog, yet I never carried my resentment very far from a party principle, except it were against certain malicious dogs, who most discovered their enmity against us in the worst of times. And I remember too well, that in the wicked ministry of the earl of Oxford, a large mastiff of our party, being unmercifully cossed, ran without thinking between my legs, as I was coming up Fishamble street; and, as I am of low stature, with very short legs, bore me riding backward down the hill for above two hundred yards: and although I made use of his tail for a bridle, holding it fast with both my hands, and clung my legs as close to his sides as I could; yet we both came down together into the middle of the kennel; where after rolling three or four times over each other, I got up with much ado, amid the shouts and huzzas of a thousand malicious jacobites. I cannot indeed but gratefully acknowledge, that for this and many other services and sufferings, I have been since more than over paid.

This adventure may perhaps have put me out of love with the diversion of cossing, which I confess myself an enemy to, unless we could always be sure of distinguishing tory dogs; whereof great numbers have since been so prudent, as entirely to change their principles, and are justly esteemed the best worriers of their former friends.

I am assured, and partly know, that all the chimney sweepers boys, where members of parliament chiefly lodge, are hired by our enemies to skulk in the tops of chimnies, with their heads no higher than will just permit them to look round; and at the usual hours when members are going to the

house, if they see a coach stand near the lodging of any loyal member, they call coach, coach, as loud as they can bawl, just at the instant when the footman begins to give the same call. And this is chiefly done on those days, when any point of importance is to be debated. This practice may be of very dangerous consequence; for these boys are all hired by enemies to the government: and thus by the absence of a few members for a few minutes, a question may be carried against the true interest of the kingdom, and very probably not without an eye toward the pretender.

I have not observed the wit and fancy of this town so much employed in any one article, as that of contriving variety of signs, to hang over houses where punch is to be sold. The bowl is represented full of punch; the ladle stands erect in the middle supported sometimes by one, and sometimes by two animals, whose feet rest upon the edge of the bowl. These animals are sometimes one black lion, and sometimes a couple; sometimes a single eagle, and sometimes a spread one; and we often meet a crow, a swan, a bear, or a cock, in the same posture.

Now, I cannot find how any of these animals, either separate or in conjunction, are, properly speaking, fit emblems or embellishments to advance the sale of punch. Besides, it is agreed among naturalists, that no brute can endure the taste of strong liquor, except where he has been used to it from his infancy: and consequently it is against all the rules of hieroglyph, to assign those animals as patrons or protectors of punch. For, in that case, we ought to suppose that the host keeps always ready the real bird or beast, whereof the picture hangs over his door,

door, to entertain his guests; which however to my knowledge is not true in fact; not one of those birds being a proper companion for a Christian, as to aiding and assisting in making the punch. For, as they are drawn upon the sign, they are much more likely to mute, or shed their feathers into the liquor. Then as to the bear, he is too terrible, awkward, and slovenly a companion to converse with; neither are any of them all handy enough to fill liquor to the company: I do therefore vehemently suspect a plot intended against the government by these devices. For, although the spread eagle be the arms of Germany, upon which account it may possibly be a lawful protestant sign, yet I, who am very suspicious of fair outsides, in a matter which so nearly concerns our welfare, cannot but call to mind, that the pretender's wife is said to be of German birth; and that many popish princes, in so vast an extent of land, are reported to excel both at making and drinking punch: besides, it is plain that the spread eagle exhibits to us the perfect figure of a cross, which is a badge of popery. Then as to the cock, he is well known to represent the French nation, our old and dangerous enemy. The swan, who must of necessity cover the entire bowl with his wings, can be no other than the Spaniard, who endeavours to engross all the treasures of the Indies to himself. The lion is indeed the common emblem of royal power, as well as the arms of England; but to paint him black is perfect jacobitism, and a manifest type of those who blacken the actions of the best princes. It is not easy to distinguish, whether that other fowl painted over the punch bowl, be a crow or a raven. It is true they have both been

ominous birds: but I rather take it to be the former; because it is the disposition of a crow to pick out the eyes of other creatures, and often even of Christians, after they are dead; and is therefore drawn here with a design to put the jacobites in mind of their old practice, first to lull us asleep (which is an emblem of death) and then to blind our eyes, that we may not see their dangerous practices against the state.

To speak my private opinion; the least offensive picture in the whole set seems to be the bear; because he represents *ursa major*, or the great bear, who presides over the north, where the reformation first began; and which, next to Britain (including Scotland and the north of Ireland) is the great protector of the true protestant religion. But however, in those signs where I observe the bear to be chained, I cannot help surmising a jacobite contrivance; by which these traitors hint an earnest desire of using all true whigs, as their predecessors did the primitive Christians: I mean, to represent us as bears, and then halloo their tory dogs to bait us to death.

Thus I have given a fair account of what I dislike in all the signs set over those houses that invite us to punch. I own it was a matter that did not need explaining, being so very obvious to common understandings; yet I know not how it happens, but methinks there seems a fatal blindness to overspread our corporeal eyes, as well as our intellectual; and I heartily wish I may be found a false prophet; for these are not bare suspicions, but manifest demonstrations.

Therefore, away with these popish, jacobitish, and idolatrous gewgaws. And I heartily wish a law

law were enacted under severe penalties against drinking punch at all; for nothing is easier than to prove it a disaffected liquor: the chief ingredients, which are brandy, oranges, and lemons, are all sent us from popish countries; and nothing remains of protestant growth, but sugar and water. For as to biscuit, which formerly was held a necessary ingredient, and is truly British, we find it is entirely rejected.

But I will put the truth of my assertion past all doubt: I mean, that this liquor is by one important innovation grown of ill example, and dangerous consequence to the publick. It is well known, that by the true original institution of making punch left us by captain Ratcliff, the sharpness is only occasioned by the juice of lemons; and so continued until after the happy revolution. Oranges, alas! are a mere innovation, and in a manner but of yesterday. It was the politicks of jacobites to introduce them gradually; and to what intent? the thing speaks itself. It was cunningly to show their virulence against his sacred majesty king William of ever glorious and immortal memory. But of late (to show how fast disloyalty increases) they came from one to two, and then to three oranges; nay at present we often find punch made all with oranges, and not one single lemon. For the jacobites, before the death of that immortal prince, had by a superstition formed a private prayer, that as they squeezed the orange, so might that protestant king be squeezed to death; according to the known sorcery described by Virgil;

Limus ut hic durescit, et hæc ut cera liquescit, etc.

And thus the Romans, when they sacrificed an ox, used this kind of prayer; "As I knock down this "ox, so may'st thou, O Jupiter! knock down our "enemies." In like manner, after king William's death, whenever a jacobite squeezed an orange, he had a mental curse upon the glorious memory, and a hearty wish for power to squeeze all his majesty's friends to death as he squeezed that orange, which bore one of his titles, as he was prince of Orange. This I do affirm for truth, many of that faction having confessed it to me under an oath of secrecy, which however I thought it my duty not to keep when I saw my dear country in danger. But what better can be expected from an impious set of men, who never scruple to drink CONFUSION to all true protestants under the name of whigs? A most unchristian and inhuman practice; which to our great honour and comfort was never charged upon us, even by our most malicious detractors.

The sign of two angels hovering in the air, and with their right hands supporting a crown, is met with in several parts of this city, and has often given me great offence: for, whether by the unskilfulness or dangerous principles of the painters (although I have good reasons to suspect the latter) those angels are usually drawn with such horrid, or indeed rather diabolical countenances, that they give great offence to every loyal eye, and equal cause of triumph to the jacobite, being a most infamous reflection upon our able and excellent ministry.

I now return to that great enormity of our city cries; most of which we have borrowed from London. I shall consider them only in a political view, as they nearly affect the peace and safety of both kingdoms; and

and having been originally contrived by wicked Machiavels to bring in popery, slavery, and arbitrary power, by defeating the protestant succession and introducing the pretender, ought in justice to be here laid open to the world.

About two or three months after the happy revolution, all persons who possessed any employment or office in church or state, were obliged by an act of parliament to take the oaths to king William and queen Mary: and a great number of disaffected persons refusing to take the said oaths, from a pretended scruple of conscience, but really from a spirit of popery and rebellion, they contrived a plot to make the swearing to those princes odious in the eyes of the people. To this end, they hired certain women of ill fame, but loud shrill voices, under pretence of selling fish, to go through the streets with sieves on their heads, and cry buy my soul, buy my soul; plainly insinuating, that all those who swore to king William were just ready to sell their souls for an employment. This cry was revived at the death of queen Anne, and, I hear, still continues in London with much offence to all true protestants; but to our great happiness seems to be almost dropped in Dublin.

But because I altogether contemn the displeasure and resentment of highflyers, tories, and jacobites, whom I look upon to be worse even than professed papists, I do here declare, that those evils which I am going to mention, were all brought in upon us in the worst of times under the late earl of Oxford's administration, during the four last years of queen Anne's reign. That wicked minister was universally known to be a papist in his heart. He

was of a most avaricious nature, and is said to have died worth four millions sterling*, beside his vast expense in building, statues, plate, jewels, and other costly rarities. He was of a mean obscure birth, from the very dregs of the people; and so illiterate that he could hardly read a paper at the council table. I forbear to touch on his open, profane, profligate life; because I desire not to rake into the ashes of the dead: and therefore I shall observe this wise maxim; *de mortuis nil nisi bonum.*

This flagitious man in order to compass his black designs, employed certain wicked instruments (which great statesmen are never without) to adapt several London cries in such a manner as would best answer his ends. And whereas it was upon good grounds grievously suspected, that all places at court were sold to the highest bidder; certain women were employed by his emissaries to carry fish in baskets on their heads, and bawl through the streets, buy my fresh places. I must indeed own that other women used the same cry, who were innocent of this wicked design, and really sold fish of that denomination to get an honest livelihood; but the rest, who were in the secret, although they carried fish in their sieves or baskets to save appearances, yet they had likewise a certain sign, somewhat resembling that of the free masons, which the purchasers of places knew well enough, and were directed by the women whither they were to resort and make their purchase. And I remember very well how oddly it looked, when we observed many gen-

* The author's meaning is just contrary to the literal sense in the character of lord Oxford.

tlemen

tlemen finely dressed about the court end of the town, and as far as York buildings where the lord treasurer Oxford dwelt, calling the women who cried buy my fresh places, and talking to them in the corner of a street until they understood each other's sign. But we never could observe that any fish was bought.

Some years before the cries last mentioned, the duke of Savoy was reported to have made certain overtures to the court of England, for admitting his eldest son by the duchess of Orleans's daughter to succeed to the crown, as next heir, upon the pretender's being rejected; and that son was immediately to turn protestant. It was confidently reported, that great numbers of people disaffected to the then illustrious, but now royal house of Hanover, were in those measures. Whereupon another set of women were hired by the jacobite leaders to cry through the whole town, buy my Savoys, dainty Savoys, curious Savoys. But I cannot directly charge the late earl of Oxford with this conspiracy, because he was not then chief minister. However, this wicked cry still continues in London, and was brought over hither, where it remains to this day; and is in my humble opinion a very offensive sound to every true protestant, who is old enough to remember those dangerous times.

During the ministry of that corrupt and jacobite earl abovementioned, the secret pernicious design of those in power, was, to sell Flanders to France: the consequence of which must have been the infallible ruin of the States General, and would have opened the way for France to obtain that universal monarchy they have so long aimed at; to which the British

British dominions must, next after Holland, have been compelled to submit, whereby the protestant religion would be rooted out of the world.

A design of this vast importance, after long consultation among the jacobite grandees with the earl of Oxford at their head, was at last determined to be carried on by the same method with the former: it was therefore again put in practice; but the conduct of it was chiefly left to chosen men, whose voices were louder and stronger than those of the other sex; and upon this occasion was first instituted in London that famous cry of FLOUNDERS. But the criers were particularly directed to pronounce the word Flaunders, and not flounders. For, the country which we now by corruption call Flanders, is in its true orthograghy spelt Flaunders, as may be obvious to all who read old English books. I say, from hence began that thundering cry, which has ever since stunned the ears of all London, made so many children fall into fits, and women miscarry; come buy my fresh flaunders, curious flaunders, charming flaunders, alive, alive, ho; which last words can, with no propriety of speech, be applied to fish manifestly dead (as I observed before in herrings and salmon) but very justly to ten provinces containing many millions of living Christians. But the application is still closer, when we consider that all the people were to be taken like fishes in a net; and by assistance of the pope, who sets up to be the universal fisher of men, the whole innocent nation was, according to our common expression, to be laid as flat as a flounder.

I remember, myself, a particular crier of flounders in London, who arrived at so much fame for the loudness

loudness of his voice, as to have the honour of being mentioned upon that account in a comedy.

He has disturbed me many a morning before he came within fifty doors of my lodging: and although I were not in those days so fully apprized of the designs which our common enemy had then in agitation, yet, I know not how, by a secret impulse, young as I was, I could not forbear conceiving a strong dislike against the fellow; and often said to myself, This cry seems to be forged in the jesuits school: alas poor England! I am grievously mistaken if there be not some popish plot at the bottom. I communicated my thoughts to an intimate friend, who reproached me with being too visionary in my speculations; but it proved afterward that I conjectured right. And I have since reflected, that if the wicked faction could have procured only a thousand men of as strong lungs as the fellow I mentioned, none can tell how terrible the consequences might have been, not only to these two kingdoms, but over all Europe, by selling Flanders to France. And yet these cries continue unpunished both in London and Dublin; although, I confess, not with equal vehemency or loudness; because the reason for contriving this desperate plot, is, to our great felicity, wholly ceased.

It is well known, that the majority of the British house of commons in the last years of queen Anne's reign, were in their hearts directly opposite to the earl of Oxford's pernicious measures; which put him under the necessity of bribing them with salaries. Whereupon he had again recourse to his old politicks. And accordingly his emissaries were very busy in employing certain artful women, of no good life and conversation

conversation (as it was proved before justice Peyton*) cry that vegetable commonly called celery through the town. These women differed from the common criers of that herb by some private mark, which I could never learn; but the matter was notorious enough, and sufficiently talked of; and about the same period was the cry of celery brought over into this kingdom. But since there is not at this present the least occasion to suspect the loyalty of our criers upon that article, I am content that it may still be tolerated.

I shall mention but one cry more, which has any reference to politicks; but is indeed, of all others, the most insolent, as well as treasonable, under our present happy establishment, I mean that of turnups; not of turnips according to the best orthography, but absolutely turnups. Although the cry be of an older date than some of the preceding enormities, for it began soon after the revolution; yet was it never known to arrive at so great a height, as during the earl of Oxford's power. Some people (whom I take to be private enemies) are indeed as ready as myself to profess their disapprobation of this cry, on pretence that it began by the contrivance of certain old procuresses, who kept houses of ill fame, where lewd women met to draw young men into vice. And this they pretend to prove by some words in the cry; because, after the crier had bawled out, turnups, ho, buy my dainty turnups, he would sometimes add the two following verses,

Turn up the mistress, and turn up the maid,
And turn up the daughter, and be not afraid.

* A famous whig justice in those times.

This

This, says some political sophists, plainly shows, that there can be nothing farther meant in so infamous a cry, than an invitation to lewdness; which indeed ought to be severely punished in all well regulated governments; yet cannot be fairly interpreted as a crime of state. But, I hope, we are not so weak and blind to be deluded at this time of day with such poor evasions. I could, if it were proper, demonstrate the very time when those two verses were composed, and name the author, who was no other than the famous Mr. Swan, so well known for his talent at quibbling, and was as virulent a jacobite as any in England. Neither could he deny the fact, when he was taxed for it in my presence by sir Henry Dutton Colt, and colonel Davenport, at the Smyrna coffeehouse, on the 10th of June 1701. Thus it appears to a demonstration, that those verses were only a blind to conceal the most dangerous designs of the party; who, from the first years after the happy revolution, used a cant way of talking in their clubs, after this manner: we hope to see the cards shuffled once more, and another king TURN UP trump: and, when shall we meet over a dish of TURNUPS? The same term of art was used in their plots against the government, and in their treasonable letters written in ciphers, and deciphered by the famous Dr. Willes, as you may read in the trials of those times. This I thought fit to set forth at large, and in so clear a light, because the Scotch and French authors have given a very different account of the word TURNUP; but whether out of ignorance or partiality I shall not decree; because I am sure the reader is convinced by my discovery. It is to be observed, that this cry was sung in a particular manner

ner by fellows in disguise, to give notice where those traitors were to meet, in order to concert their villanous designs.

I have no more to add upon this article, than an humble proposal, that those who cry this root at present in our streets of Dublin may be compelled by the justices of the peace to pronounce turnip, and not turnup; for I am afraid we have still too many snakes in our bosom, and it would be well if their cellars were sometimes searched, when the owners least expected it; for I am not out of fear, that *latet anguis in herba.*

Thus we are zealous in matters of small moment, while we neglect those of the highest importance. I have already made it manifest, that all these cries were contrived in the worst of times, under the ministry of that desperate statesman Robert, late earl of Oxford; and for that very reason ought to be rejected with horrour, as begun in the reign of jacobites, and may well be numbered among the rags of popery and treason; or, if it be thought proper that these cries must continue, surely they ought to be only trusted in the hands of true protestants, who have given security to the government.

A

MODEST

PROPOSAL

FOR PREVENTING THE CHILDREN OF POOR PEOPLE IN IRELAND FROM BEING A BURDEN TO THEIR PARENTS OR COUNTRY, AND FOR MAKING THEM BENEFICIAL TO THE PUBLICK.

1729.

IT is a melancholy object to those, who walk through this great town, or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags, and importuning every passenger for an alms. These mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in strolling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants; who, as they grow up, either turn thieves, for want of work, or leave their dear native country to fight for the pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.

I think it is agreed by all parties, that this prodigious number of children in the arms, or on the backs, or at the heels of their mothers, and frequently of their fathers, is, in the present deplorable

plorable state of the kingdom, a very great additional grievance; and therefore whoever could find out a fair, cheap, and easy method of making these children sound useful members of the commonwealth, would deserve so well of the publick, as to have his statue set up for a preserver of the nation.

But my intention is very far from being confined to provide only for the children of professed beggars: it is of a much greater extent, and shall take in the whole number of infants at a certain age, who are born of parents in effect as little able to support them, as those who demand our charity in the streets.

As to my own part, having turned my thoughts for many years upon this important subject, and maturely weighed the several schemes of our projectors, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their computation. It is true, a child just dropped from its dam may be supported by her milk for a solar year, with little other nourishment: at most not above the value of two shillings, which the mother may certainly get, or the value in scraps, by her lawful occupation of begging; and it is exactly at one year old that I propose to provide for them in such a manner, as, instead of being a charge upon their parents, or the parish, or wanting food and raiment for the rest of their lives, they shall, on the contrary, contribute to the feeding, and partly to the clothing of many thousands.

There is likewise another great advantage in my scheme, that it will prevent those voluntary abortions, and that horrid practice of women murdering their bastard children, alas! too frequent among us, sacrificing the poor innocent babes, I doubt more to avoi

avoid the expense than the shame, which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast.

The number of souls in this kingdom being usually reckoned one million and a half, of these I calculate there may be about two hundred thousand couple, whose wives are breeders; from which number I subtract thirty thousand couple, who are able to maintain their own children, (although I apprehend there cannot be so many under the present distresses of the kingdom) but this being granted, there will remain a hundred and seventy thousand breeders. I again subtract fifty thousand for those women, who miscarry, or whose children die by accident or disease within the year. There only remain a hundred and twenty thousand children of poor parents annually born. The question therefore is, How this number shall be reared and provided for? which, as I have already said, under the present situation of affairs is utterly impossible by all the methods hitherto proposed. For we can neither employ them in handicraft or agriculture; we neither build houses, (I mean in the country) nor cultivate land: they can very seldom pick up a livelihood by stealing, till they arrive at six years old, except where they are of towardly parts; although I confess they learn the rudiments much earlier; during which time they can however be properly looked upon only as probationers; as I have been informed by a principal gentleman in the county of Cavan, who protested to me, that he never knew above one or two instances under the age of six, even in a part of the kingdom so renowned for the quickest proficiency in that art.

I am assured by our merchants, that a boy or a girl before twelve years old is no saleable commodity; and even when they come to this age they will not yield above three pounds, or three pounds and half a crown at most, on the exchange; which cannot turn to account either to the parents or kingdom, the charge of nutriment and rags having been at least four times that value.

I shall now therefore humbly propose my own thoughts, which I hope will not be liable to the least objection.

I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child, well nursed, is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricasee, or a ragoust.

I do therefore humbly offer it to publick consideration, that of the hundred and twenty thousand children already computed, twenty thousand may be reserved for breed, whereof only one fourth part to be males; which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle, or swine; and my reason is, that these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore one male will be sufficient to serve four females. That the remaining hundred thousand may, at a year old, be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune through the kingdom; always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump, and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends; and when the family dines alone, the fore

or

or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt, will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.

I have reckoned upon a medium, that a child just born will weigh 12 pounds, and in a solar year, if tolerably nursed, will increase to 28 pounds.

I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children.

Infant's flesh will be in season throughout the year, but more plentifully in March, and a little before and after; for we are told by a grave author, an eminent French physician, that fish being a prolifick diet, there are more children born in roman catholick countries about nine months after Lent, than at any other season; therefore, reckoning a year after Lent, the markets will be more glutted than usual, because the number of popish infants is at least three to one in this kingdom; and therefore it will have one other collateral advantage by lessening the number of papists among us.

I have already computed the charge of nursing a beggar's child (in which list I reckon all cottagers, labourers, and four fifths of the farmers) to be about two shillings per annum, rags included; and I believe no gentleman would repine to give ten shillings for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said, will make four dishes of excellent nutritious meat, when he has only some particular friend or his own family to dine with him. Thus the landlord will learn to be a good landlord, and grow popular among his tenants; the mother will have [illegible]

neat profit, and be fit for work, till she produces another child.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may flay the carcass; the skin of which artificially dressed will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer boots for fine gentlemen.

As to our city of Dublin, shambles may be appointed for this purpose in the most convenient parts of it, and butchers we may be assured will not be wanting; although I rather recommend buying the children alive, and dressing them hot from the knife, as we do roasting pigs.

A very worthy person, a true lover of his country, and whose virtues I highly esteem, was lately pleased in discoursing on this matter to offer a refinement upon my scheme. He said, that many gentlemen of this kingdom, having of late destroyed their deer, he conceived that the want of venison might be well supplied by the bodies of young lads and maidens, not exceeding fourteen years of age nor under twelve; so great a number of both sexes in every county being now ready to starve for want of work and service: and these to be disposed of by their parents if alive, or otherwise by their nearest relations. But with due deference to so excellent a friend, and so deserving a patriot, I cannot be altogether in his sentiments; for as to the males, my American acquaintance assured me from frequent experience, that their flesh was generally tough and lean, like that of our schoolboys, by continual exercise, and their taste disagreeable, and to fatten them would not answer the charge. Then as to the females, it would, I think with humble submission, be a loss to

the publick, because they soon would become breeders themselves: and besides, it is not improbable that some scrupulous people might be apt to censure such a practice, (although indeed very unjustly) as a little bordering upon cruelty; which, I confess, has always been with me the strongest objection against any project, how well soever intended.

But in order to justify my friend, he confessed, that this expedient was put into his head by the famous Psalmanaazor, a native of the island Formosa, who came from thence to London above twenty years ago; and in conversation told my friend, that in his country, when any young person happened to be put to death, the executioner sold the carcass to persons of quality as a prime dainty; and that in his time the body of a plump girl of fifteen, who was crucified for an attempt to poison the emperor, was sold to his imperial majesty's prime minister of state, and other great mandarins of the court, in joints from the gibbet at four hundred crowns. Neither indeed can I deny, that if the same use were made of several plump young girls in this town, who without one single groat to their fortunes cannot stir abroad without a chair, and appear at a playhouse and assemblies in foreign fineries which they never will pay for, the kingdom would not be the worse.

Some persons of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people, who are aged, diseased, or maimed; and I have been desired to employ my thoughts, what course may be taken to ease the nation of so grievous an incumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known, that they are

every day dying, and rotting, by cold and famine, and filth and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the young labourers, they are now in almost as hopeful a condition: they cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment, to a degree, that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labour, they have not strength to perform it; and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.

I have too long digressed, and therefore shall return to my subject. I think the advantages by the proposal, which I have made, are obvious and many, as well as of the highest importance.

For first, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the number of papists, with whom we are yearly overrun, being the principal breeders of the nation, as well as our most dangerous enemies; and who stay at home on purpose to deliver the kingdom to the pretender, hoping to take their advantage by the absence of so many good protestants, who have chosen rather to leave their country, than stay at home and pay tithes against their conscience to an episcopal curate.

Secondly, the poorer tenants will have something valuable of their own, which by law may be made liable to distress, and help to pay their landlord's rent; their corn and cattle being already seized, and money a thing unknown.

Thirdly, whereas the maintenance of a hundred thousand children, from two years old and upward, cannot be computed at less than ten shillings a piece per annum, the nation's stock will be thereby increased fifty thousand pounds per annum, beside the profit

profit of a new dish introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom, who have any refinement in taste. And the money will circulate among ourselves, the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture.

Fourthly, the constant breeders, beside the gain of eight shillings sterling per annum by the sale of their children, will be rid of the charge of maintaining them after the first year.

Fifthly, this food would likewise bring great custom to taverns: where the vintners will certainly be so prudent as to procure the best receipts for dressing it to perfection, and consequently have their houses frequented by all the fine gentlemen, who justly value themselves upon their knowledge in good eating; and a skilful cook, who understands how to oblige his guests, will contrive to make it as expensive as they please.

Sixthly, this would be a great inducement to marriage, which all wise nations have either encouraged by rewards, or enforced by laws and penalties. It would increase the care and tenderness of mothers toward their children, when they were sure of a settlement for life to the poor babes, provided in some sort by the publick, to their annual profit or expense. We should see an honest emulation among the married women, which of them could bring the fattest child to the market. Men would become as fond of their wives during the time of their pregnancy, as they are now of the mares in foal, their cows in calf, their sows when they are ready to farrow; nor offer to beat or kick them (as is too frequent a practice) for fear of a miscarriage.

Many other advantages might be enumerated.

For instance, the addition of some thousand carcasses in our exportation of barrelled beef: the propagation of swines flesh, and improvement in the art of making good bacon, so much wanted among us by the great destruction of pigs, too frequent at our table; which are no way comparable in taste or magnificence to a well grown, fat, yearling child, which roasted whole will make a considerable figure at a lord mayor's feast, or any other publick entertainment. But this, and many others, I omit, being studious of brevity.

Supposing that one thousand families in this city would be constant customers for infants flesh, beside others who might have it at merry meetings, particularly at weddings and christenings, I compute that Dublin would take off annually about twenty thousand carcasses; and the rest of the kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining eighty thousand.

I can think of no one objection, that will posssibly be raised against this proposal, unless it should be urged, that the number of people will be thereby much lessened in the kingdom. This I freely own, and it was indeed one principal design in offering it to the world. I desire the reader will observe, that I calculate my remedy for this one individual kingdom of Ireland, and for no other that ever was, is, or, I think, ever can be upon earth. Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: of taxing our absentees at five shillings a pound: of using neither clothes, nor houshold furniture, except what is of our own growth and manufacture: of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments, that promote foreign luxury: of curing the expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming in our women: of introducing

troducing a vein of parsimony, prudence, and temperance: of learning to love our country, in the want of which we differ even from LAPLANDERS, and the inhabitants of TOPINAMBOO: of quitting our animosities and factions, nor acting any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken: of being a little cautious not to sell our country and conscience for nothing: of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy toward their tenants: Lastly, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry, and skill into our shopkeepers; who, if a resolution could now be taken to buy only our native goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the price, the measure, and the goodness, nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.

Therefore I repeat, let no man talk to me of these and the like expedients, till he has at least some glimpse of hope, that there will ever be some hearty and sincere attempt to put them in practice.

But, as to myself, having being wearied out for many years with offering vain, idle, visionary thoughts, and at length utterly despairing of success, I fortunately fell upon this proposal; which, as it is wholly new, so it has something solid and real, of no expense and little trouble, full in our own power, and whereby we can incur no danger in disobliging ENGLAND. For this kind of commodity will not bear exportation, the flesh being of too tender a consistence to admit a long continuance in salt, although perhaps I could name a country, which would be glad to eat up our whole nation without it.

After

After all, I am not so violently bent upon my own opinion as to reject any offer proposed by wise men, which shall be found equally innocent, cheap, easy, and effectual. But before something of that kind shall be advanced in contradiction to my scheme, and offering a better, I desire the author or authors will be pleased maturely to consider two points. First, as things now stand, how they will be able to find food and raiment for a hundred thousand useless mouths and backs. And secondly, there being a round million of creatures in human figure throughout this kingdom, whose whole subsistence put into a common stock would leave them in debt two millions of pounds sterling, adding those, who are beggars by profession, to the bulk of farmers, cottagers, and labourers, with the wives and children, who are beggars in effect; I desire those politicians who dislike my overture, and may perhaps be so bold as to attempt an answer, that they will first ask the parents of these mortals, whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness to have been sold for food at a year old, in the manner I prescribe, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual scene of misfortunes, as they have since gone through, by the oppression of landlords, the impossibility of paying rent without money or trade, the want of common sustenance, with neither house nor clothes to cover them from the inclemencies of the weather, and the most inevitable prospect of entailing the like, or greater miseries, upon their breed for ever.

I profess in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not the least personal interest in endeavouring to promote this necessary work, having no other motive than

than the publick good of my country, by advancing our trade, providing for infants, relieving the poor, and giving some pleasure to the rich. I have no children, by which I can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine years old, and my wife past childbearing.

N. B. *About*

N. B. *About the time that the following speech was written, the town was much pestered with* Street Robbers; *who, in a barbarous manner, would seize on gentlemen, and take them into remote corners, and after they had robbed them, would leave them bound and gagged. It is remarkable, that this speech had so good an effect, that there have been very few robberies of that kind committed since.*

THE

LAST SPEECH

AND

DYING WORDS

OF

*EBENEZER ELLISTON**,

WHO WAS EXECUTED THE SECOND DAY OF MAY, 1722.

Published, at his desire, for the common good.

I AM now going to suffer the just punishment for my crimes prescribed by the law of God and my country. I know it is the constant custom, that those who come to this place should have speeches

* The parents of Ebenezer Elliston, who were rigid dissenters, had given him a good education, put him apprentice to a silk-weaver, and settled him in that profession, which he gradually exchanged for those of a fine gentleman, a gamester, and a house-breaker.

made

made for them, and cried about in their own hearing, as they are carried to execution; and truly they are such speeches, that although our fraternity be an ignorant, illiterate people, they would make a man ashamed to have such nonsense and false English charged upon him, even when he is going to the gallows. They contain a pretended account of our birth and family, of the fact for which we are to die, of our sincere repentance, and a declaration of our religion. I cannot expect to avoid the same treatment with my predecessors.

However, having had an education one or two degrees better than those of my rank and profession; I have been considering, ever since my commitment, what it might be proper for me to deliver upon this occasion.

And first, I cannot say from the bottom of my heart, that I am truly sorry for the offence I have given to God and the world; but I am very much so for the bad success of my villanies, in bringing me to this untimely end; for it is plainly evident that after having some time ago obtained a pardon from the crown, I again took up my old trade; my evil habits were so rooted in me, and I was grown so unfit for any other kind of employment. And therefore, although, in compliance with my friends, I resolved to go to the gallows after the usual manner, kneeling, with a book in my hand and my eyes lifted up; yet I shall feel no more devotion in my heart, than I have observed in my comrades, who have been drunk among common whores the very night before their execution. I can say farther, from my own knowledge, that two of my fraternity, after they had been hanged, and wonderfully came to life and made their escapes,

escapes, as it sometimes happens, proved afterward the wickedest rogues I ever knew, and so continued until they were hanged again for good and all; and yet they had the impudence at both times they went to the gallows, to smite their breasts, and lift up their eyes to Heaven all the way.

Secondly, From the knowledge I have of my own wicked dispositions, and that of my comrades, I give it as my opinion, that nothing can be more unfortunate to the publick, than the mercy of the government in ever pardoning or transporting us; unless when we betray one another, as we never fail to do, if we are sure to be well paid, and then a pardon may do good: by the same rule, That it is better to have one fox in a farm than three or four. But we generally make a shift to return after being transported, and are ten times greater rogues than before, and much more cunning. Besides, I know it by experience, that some hope we have of finding mercy when we are tried, or after we are condemned, is always a great encouragement to us.

Thirdly, Nothing is more dangerous to idle young fellows than the company of those odious common whores we frequent, and of which this town is full: these wretches put us upon all mischief to feed their lusts and extravagancies: they are ten times more bloody and cruel than men, their advice is always not to spare if we are pursued; they get drunk with us, and are common to us; and yet, if they can get any thing by it, are sure to be our betrayers.

Now, as I am a dying man, I have done something which may be of good use to the publick. I have left with an honest man (and indeed the only honest man I was ever acquainted with) the names of all

all my wicked brethren, the present places of their abode, with a short account of the chief crimes they have committed; in many of which I have been their accomplice, and heard the rest from their own mouths: I have likewise set down the names of those we call our setters, of the wicked houses we frequent, and of those who receive and buy our stolen goods. I have solemnly charged this honest man, and have received this promise upon oath, that whenever he hears of any rogue to be tried for robbing or housebreaking, he will look into his list, and if he finds the name there of the thief concerned, to send the whole paper to the government. Of this I here give my companions fair and publick warning, and hope they will take it.

In the paper abovementioned, which I left with my friend, I have also set down the names of several gentlemen who have been robbed in Dublin streets for three years past: I have told the circumstances of those robberies; and show plainly that nothing but the want of common courage was the cause of their misfortune. I have therefore desired my friend, that whenever any gentleman happens to be robbed in the streets, he will get that relation printed and published, with the first letters of those gentlemen's names, who by their own want of bravery are like to be the cause of all the mischief of that kind which may happen for the future.

I cannot leave the world without a short description of that kind of life which I have led for some years past; and it is exactly the same with the rest of our wicked brethren.

Although we are generally so corrupted from our childhood, as to have no sense of goodness; yet something

something heavy always hangs about us, I know not what it is, that we are never easy till we are half drunk among our whores and companions; nor sleep sound unless we drink longer than we can stand. If we go abroad in the day, a wise man would easily find us to be rogues by our faces, we have such a suspicious, fearful, and constrained countenance; often turning back, and slinking through narrow lanes and alleys. I have never failed of knowing a brother thief by his looks, though I never saw him before. Every man among us keeps his particular whore, who is however common to us all when we have a mind to change. When we have got a booty, if it be in money, we divide it equally among our companions, and soon squander it away on our vices in those houses that receive us; for the master and mistress, and the very tapster, go snacks: and besides make us pay triple reckonings. If our plunder be plate, watches, rings, snuffboxes, and the like; we have customers in all quarters of the town to take them off. I have seen a tankard worth fifteen pounds sold to a fellow in —— street for twenty shillings; and a gold watch for thirty. I have set down his name, and that of several others in the paper already mentioned. We have setters watching in corners, and by dead walls, to give us notice when a gentleman goes by; especially, if he be any thing in drink. I believe in my conscience, that if an account were made of a thousand pounds in stolen goods; considering the low rates we sell them at, the bribes we must give for concealment, the extortions of alehouse reckonings, and other necessary charges, there would not remain fifty pounds clear to be divided among the robbers. And out of this we must find clothes for our whores, beside treating

ing them from morning to night; who in requital reward us with nothing but treachery and the pox. For when our money is gone, they are every moment threatening to inform against us, if we will not go out and look for more. If any thing in this world be like Hell, as I have heard it described by our clergy, the truest picture of it must be in the back room of one of our alehouses at midnight; where a crew of robbers and their whores are met together after a booty, and are beginning to grow drunk; from which time, until they are past their senses, is such a continued horrible noise of cursing, blasphemy, lewdness, scurrility, and brutish behaviour, such roaring and confusion, such a clutter of mugs and pots at each other's heads; that Bedlam, in comparison, is a sober and orderly place. At last they all tumble from their stools and benches, and sleep away the rest of the night; and generally the landlord or his wife, or some other whore who has a stronger head than the rest, picks their pockets before they wake. The misfortune is, that we can never be easy till we are drunk; and our drunkenness constantly exposes us to be more easily betrayed and taken.

This is a short picture of the life I have led; which is more miserable than that of the poorest labourer who works for four pence a day; and yet custom is so strong, that I am confident if I could make my escape at the foot of the gallows, I should be following the same course this very evening. So that upon the whole, we ought to be looked upon as the common enemies of mankind; whose interest it is to root us out like wolves and other mischievous vermin, against which no fair play is required.

If I have done service to men in what I have

said, I shall hope I have done service to God; and that will be better than a silly speech made for me full of whining and canting, which I utterly despise, and have never been used to; yet such a one I expect to have my ears tormented with as I am passing along the streets.

Good people, fare ye well; bad as I am, I leave many worse behind me. I hope you shall see me die like a man the death of a dog.

E. E.

THE

STORY

OF THE

INJURED LADY:

WRITTEN BY HERSELF,

IN A LETTER TO HER FRIEND.

WITH HIS ANSWER.

SIR,

BEING ruined by the inconstancy and unkindness of a lover, I hope a true and plain relation of my misfortunes may be of use and warning to credulous maids, never to put too much trust in deceitful men.

A gentleman * in the neighbourhood had two mistresses, another and myself †; and he pretended honourable love to us both. Our three houses stood pretty near one another; his was parted from mine by a river ‡, and from my rival's by an old broken wall ||. But before I enter into the particulars of this gentleman's hard usage of me, I will give a very just and impartial character of my rival and myself.

As to her person, she is tall and lean, and very ill

* England. † Scotland and Ireland. ‡ The Irish sea.
|| The Picts wall.

 shaped;

shaped; she has bad features, and a worse complexion; she has a stinking breath, and twenty ill smells about her besides; which are yet more unsufferable by her natural sluttishness: for she is always lousy, and never without the itch. As to her other qualities, she has no reputation either for virtue, honesty, truth, or manners: and it is no wonder, considering what her education has been. Scolding and cursing are her common conversation. To sum up all; she is poor and beggarly, and gets a sorry maintenance by pilfering wherever she comes. As for this gentleman, who is now so fond of her, she still bears him an invincible hatred; reviles him to his face, and rails at him in all companies. Her house is frequented by a company of rogues and thieves, and pickpockets, whom she encourages to rob his henroosts, steal his corn and cattle, and do him all manner of mischief. She has been known to come at the head of these rascals, and beat her lover until he was sore from head to foot, and then force him to pay for the trouble she was at. Once attended with a crew of ragamuffins, she broke into his house, turned all things topsyturvy, and then set it on fire. At the same time she told so many lies among his servants, that it set them all by the ears, and his poor steward* was knocked on the head; for which I think, and so does all the country, that she ought to be answerable. To conclude her character; she is of a different religion, being a presbyterian of the most rank and violent kind, and consequently having an inveterate hatred to the church; yet I am sure, I have been always told,

* Charles I.

that

that in marriage there ought to be a union of minds as well as of persons.

I will now give my own character, and shall do it in few words, and with modesty and truth.

I was reckoned to be as handsome as any in our neighbourhood, until I became pale and thin with grief and ill usage. I am still fair enough, and have I think no very ill feature about me. They that see me now will hardly allow me ever to have had any great share of beauty; for, beside being so much altered, I go always mobbed, and in an undress, as well out of neglect, as indeed for want of clothes to appear in. I might add to all this, that I was born to a good estate, although it now turns to little account under the oppressions I endure, and has been the true cause of all my misfortunes.

Some years ago, this gentleman, taking a fancy either to my person or fortune, made his addresses to me; which, being then young and foolish, I too readily admitted; he seemed to use me with so much tenderness, and his conversation was so very engaging, that all my constancy and virtue were too soon overcome; and to dwell no longer upon a theme that causes such bitter reflections, I must confess with shame, that I was undone by the common arts practised upon all easy credulous virgins, half by force, and half by consent, after solemn vows and protestations of marriage. When he had once got possession, he soon began to play the usual part of a too fortunate lover, affecting on all occasions to show his authority, and to act like a conqueror. First, he found fault with the government of my family, which I grant was none of the best, consisting of ignorant illiterate creatures; for at that time

I knew but little of the world. In compliance to him therefore, I agreed to fall into his ways and methods of living; I consented that his steward should govern my house, and have liberty to employ an under steward*, who should receive his directions. My lover proceeded farther, turned away several old servants and tenants, and supplying me with others from his own house, these grew so domineering and unreasonable, that there was no quiet, and I heard of nothing but perpetual quarrels, which although I could not possibly help, yet my lover laid all the blame and punishment upon me; and upon every falling out, still turned away more of my people, and supplied me in their stead with a number of fellows and dependents of his own, whom he had no other way to provide for. Overcome by love, and to avoid noise and contention, I yielded to all his usurpations; and finding it in vain to resist, I thought it my best policy to make my court to my new servants, and draw them to my interests; I fed them from my own table with the best I had, put my new tenants on the choice parts of my land, and treated them all so kindly, that they began to love me as well as their master. In process of time all my old servants were gone, and I had not a creature about me, nor above one or two tenants but what were of his choosing; yet I had the good luck by gentle usage to bring over the greatest part of them to my side. When my lover observed this, he began to alter his language; and to those who inquired about me, he would answer, that I was an old dependent upon his family, whom he had placed on

* The lord lieutenant.

some

some concerns of his own; and he began to use me accordingly, neglecting by degrees all common civility in his behaviour. I shall never forget the speech he made me one morning, which he delivered with all the gravity in the world. He put me in mind of the vast obligations I lay under to him in sending me so many of his people for my own good, and to teach me manners: that it had cost him ten times more than I was worth to maintain me: that it had been much better for him if I had been damned, or burnt, or sunk to the bottom of the sea: that it was reasonable I should strain myself as far as I was able to reimburse him some of his charges: that from henceforward he expected his word should be a law to me in all things; that I must maintain a parish watch against thieves and robbers, and give salaries to an overseer, a constable, and others, all of his own choosing, whom he would send from time to time to be spies upon me: that to enable me the better in supporting these expenses, my tenants should be obliged to carry all their goods cross the river to his own town market, and pay toll on both sides, and then sell them at half value. But because we were a nasty sort of people, and that he could not endure to touch any thing we had a hand in, and likewise, because he wanted work to employ his own folks, therefore we must send all our goods to his market just in their naturals; the milk immediately from the cow, without making it into cheese or butter; the corn in the ear; the grass as it is mowed; the wool as it comes from the sheep's back; and bring the fruit upon the branch, that he might not be obliged to eat it after our filthy hands: that if a tenant carried but a piece of bread and

cheese to eat by the way, or an inch of worsted to mend his stockings, he should forfeit his whole parcel: and because a company of rogues usually plyed on the river between us, who often robbed my tenants of their goods and boats, he ordered a waterman of his to guard them, whose manner was to be out of the way until the poor wretches were plundered; then to overtake the thieves, and seize all as a lawful prize to his master and himself. It would be endless to repeat a hundred other hardships he has put upon me; but it is a general rule, that whenever he imagines the smallest advantage will redound to one of his footboys by any new oppression of me and my whole family and estate, he never disputes it a moment. All this has rendered me so very insignificant and contemptible at home, that some servants, to whom I pay the greatest wages, and many tenants, who have the most beneficial leases, are gone over to live with him; yet I am bound to continue their wages, and pay their rents; by which means one third part of my whole income is spent on his estate, and above another third by his tolls and markets; and my poor tenants are so sunk and impoverished, that instead of maintaining me suitably to my quality, they can hardly find me clothes to keep me warm, or provide the common necessaries of life for themselves.

Matters being in this posture between me and my lover; I received intelligence that he had been for some time making very pressing overtures of marriage to my rival, until there happened some misunderstandings between them; she gave him ill words, and threatened to break off all commerce with him. He, on the other side, having either acquired cou-

rage by his triumphs over me, or supposing her as tame a fool as I, thought at first to carry it with a high hand; but hearing at the same time, that she had thoughts of making some private proposals to join with me against him, and doubting with very good reason, that I would readily accept them, he seemed very much disconcerted. This I thought was a proper occasion to show some great example of generosity and love; and so without farther consideration, I sent him word, that hearing there was likely to be a quarrel between him and my rival, notwithstanding all that had passed, and without binding him to any conditions in my own favour, I would stand by him against her and all the world, while I had a penny in my purse, or a petticoat to pawn. This message was subscribed by all my chief tenants; and proved so powerful, that my rival immediately grew more tractable upon it. The result of which was, that there is now a treaty of marriage* concluded between them, the wedding clothes are bought, and nothing remains but to perform the ceremony, which is put off for some days, because they design it to be a publick wedding. And to reward my love, constancy, and generosity, he has bestowed on me the office of being sempstress to his grooms and footmen, which I am forced to accept or starve. Yet in the midst of this my situation, I cannot but have some pity for this deluded man, to cast himself away on an infamous creature, who, whatever she pretends, I can prove would at this very minute rather be a whore to a certain great man, that shall be nameless, if she might have her

* Treaty of union.

will.

will. For my part I think, and so does all the country too, that the man is possessed; at least none of us are able to imagine what he can possibly see in her, unless she has bewitched him, or given him some powder.

I am sure I never sought this alliance, and you can bear me witness, that I might have had other matches; nay if I were lightly disposed, I could still perhaps have offers, that some, who hold their heads higher, would be glad to accept. But alas! I never had any such wicked thought; all I now desire is, only to enjoy a little quiet, to be free from the persecutions of this unreasonable man, and that he will let me manage my own little fortune to the best advantage; for which I will undertake to pay him a considerable pension every year, much more considerable than what he now gets by his oppressions; for he must needs find himself a loser at last, when he has drained me and my tenants so dry, that we shall not have a penny for him or ourselves. There is one imposition of his I had almost forgot, which I think unsufferable, and will appeal to you or any reasonable person, whether it be so or not. I told you before, that by an old compact we agreed to have the same steward; at which time I consented likewise to regulate my family and estate by the same method with him, which he then showed me written down in form, and I approved of. Now, the turn he thinks fit to give this compact of ours is very extraordinary; for he pretends, that whatever orders he shall think fit to prescribe for the future in his family, he may, if he will, compel mine to observe them without asking my advice, or hearing my reasons. So that I must not make a lease without his consent,

consent, or give any directions for the well governing of my family, but what he countermands whenever he pleases. This leaves me at such confusion and uncertainty, that my servants know not when to obey me; and my tenants, although many of them be very well inclined, seem quite at a loss.

But I am too tedious upon this melancholy subject, which however I hope you will forgive, since the happiness of my whole life depends upon it. I desire you will think awhile, and give your best advice what measures I shall take with prudence, justice, courage, and honour, to protect my liberty and fortune against the hardships and severities I lie under from that unkind, inconstant man.

THE

ANSWER

TO THE

INJURED LADY.

MADAM,

I HAVE received your ladyship's letter, and carefully considered every part of it, and shall give you my opinion how you ought to proceed for your own security. But first I must beg leave to tell your ladyship, that you were guilty of an unpardonable weakness the other day, in making that offer to your lover of standing by him in any quarrel he might have with your rival. You know very well, that she began to apprehend he had designs of using her as he had done you; and common prudence might have directed you rather to have entered into some measures with her for joining against him, until he might at least be brought to some reasonable terms: but your invincible hatred to that lady, has carried your resentments so high, as to be the cause of your ruin; yet if you please to consider, this aversion of yours began a good while before she became your rival, and was taken up by you and your family in a sort of compliment to your lover, who formerly had

a great

a great abhorrence of her. It is true, since that time you have suffered very much by her encroachments upon your estate, but she never pretended to govern and direct you; and now you have drawn a new enemy upon yourself; for I think you may count upon all the ill offices she can possibly do you by her credit with her husband; whereas, if instead of openly declaring against her without any provocation, you had but sat still awhile, and said nothing, that gentleman would have lessened his severity to you out of perfect fear. This weakness of yours you call generosity; but I doubt there was more in the matter: in short, madam, I have good reasons to think you were betrayed to it by the pernicious counsel of some about you: for to my certain knowledge, several of your tenants and servants, to whom you have been very kind, are as arrant rascals as any in the country. I cannot but observe what a mighty difference there is, in one particular, between your ladyship and your rival. Having yielded up your person, you thought nothing else worth defending, and therefore you will not now insist upon those very conditions, for which you yielded at first. But your ladyship cannot be ignorant, that some years since, your rival did the same thing, and upon no conditions at all; nay this gentleman kept her as a miss, and yet made her pay for her diet and lodging. But, it being at a time when he had no steward, and his family out of order, she stole away, and has now got the trick very well known among the women of the town, to grant a man the favour over night, and the next day have the impudence to deny it to his face. But it is too late to reproach you with any former oversights, which cannot now be rectified. I know the matters

matters of fact, as you relate them, are true and fairly represented. My advice therefore is this: get your tenants together as soon as you conveniently can, and make them agree to the following resolutions:

First, That your family and tenants have no dependence upon the said gentleman, farther than by the old agreement, which obliges you to have the same steward, and to regulate your household by such methods as you should both agree to.

Secondly, That you will not carry your goods to the market of his town, unless you please, nor be hindered from carrying them any where else.

Thirdly, That the servants you pay wages to shall live at home, or forfeit their places.

Fourthly, That whatever lease you make to a tenant, it shall not be in his power to break it.

If he will agree to these articles, I advise you to contribute as largely as you can to all charges of parish and county.

I can assure you, several of that gentleman's ablest tenants and servants are against his severe usage of you, and would be glad of an occasion to convince the rest of their errour, if you will not be wanting to yourself.

If the gentleman refuses these just and reasonable offers, pray let me know it, and perhaps I may think of something else that will be more effectual.

I am,

MADAM,

Your ladyship's, etc.

AN

ANSWER

TO

THE CRAFTSMAN

OF DEC. 12, 1730,

ON A VERY INTERESTING SUBJECT RELATIVE TO

IRELAND.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

THE CRAFTSMAN ITSELF.

THE CRAFTSMAN.

NO. 232. SATURDAY, DEC. 12, 1730.

THE following article, which has lately appeared in the newspapers, deserves our immediate consideration, viz.

" They write from Dublin, that an officer from " every regiment in the French service is arrived " there in order to raise recruits for their respective " corps; which is not to be done in a clandestine " manner, as formerly (when several persons suf- " fered death for it) but publickly. These gentle-

" men are to disperse themselves into the several " counties, where they have the best interest; and a " field officer is to reside constantly at Dublin, to " hear all complaints, which may be made by any of " the recruits against their officers; and also to pre- " pare for sending them off.—Count BROGLIO has " been soliciting an order to this purpose, these two " years."

When I first read this account in the publick prints, I looked upon it as a common piece of false intelligence, and was in full expectation of seeing it contradicted in the next day's papers, according to frequent custom; but, having since heard it confidently affirmed to be true (although I can hardly yet believe it, especially as to every part) the duty which I owe my country, and my zeal for the present establishment, oblige me to take some notice of an affair, which I apprehend to be of very great importance to both.

It will be necessary, in the first place, to give the reader a short account of the nature of these troops, as they are now established in France.

They consist, as we have been informed, of one regiment of horse, and five regiments of foot, all doubly or trebly officered; so that they are of themselves a very considerable body of men.

But their number is the least point to be considered in this affair. There are other circumstances, which render these troops infinitely more formidable to Great Britain. They are not only all Roman catholicks, but the most dangerous of that communion with respect to us, I mean Roman catholick subjects of our dominions; many of whom have been obliged to fly their native country, on account of

rebellion

rebellions and conspiracies in which they have been engaged; and all of them devoted by inclination, by interest, by conscience, by every motive human and divine, to the service of the pretender, in opposition to the protestant succession in his majesty's royal family.

To this we may add, that they are generally esteemed the best forces in the French service; that they have always behaved themselves as such in the late wars; and are commanded by officers of approved courage, as well as great skill and experience in military affairs.

It is said likewise, that the serjeants, corporals, and private men are so well seasoned to danger, and expert in their duty, that, by a gradual promotion they could furnish officers for a very formidable army, in case of any sudden invasion or insurrection.

In the next place, it will not be improper to examine this affair with regard to our laws.

It is made felony, by act of parliament in Ireland, for any subject of that kingdom to enlist himself, or to enlist others, in the service of any foreign state; and it is well known that multitudes of poor wretches have suffered death upon that account.

We know it may be said, that a power is reserved to his majesty, by a clause in that act, to dispense with it, by granting any foreign prince a license to raise forces in his dominions, and indemnifying his subjects from the penalties of the law.

Although it is far from my intention to dispute any of his majesty's legal prerogatives, or to call the wisdom of the legislature in question, yet I must take the liberty to observe, that such powers have

been sometimes granted out of complaisance to the crown, that the prince's hands may not be absolutely tied up, and in full confidence that they will never be exerted but for the benefit of this nation, or possibly of some protestant ally, upon great emergencies of state. The exercise of the prerogative, in these cases, is therefore merely a prudential part, which is left to the discretion of the prince and his ministers, who ought always to be supposed the best judges of these affairs; and therefore how ridiculous would it be to send to the attorney general for his opinion in such a case, who can be a competent judge of nothing but the legality of it, and whether the affair be actionable or not; but ministers ought to regulate their conduct, in these respects, according to the situation of affairs, and the exigencies of government.

I must therefore beg leave to consider the present subject of the Irish forces, in this light.

It will not be denied, I presume, that a license to recruit Roman catholick regiments of English subjects, in foreign service and in the interest of a pretender to the crown (which is death by the law, without his majesty's permission) is a favour of a very extraordinary nature, and ought to be attended with some extraordinary circumstances. I confess that I can see no such extraordinary circumstances at present; unless it should be said that this favour was granted, in order to engage our good allies in the demolition of Dunkirk; but I hope they have more generosity than to insist upon such hard terms, for the effectual performance of that which they are obliged by treaty to do. I am sure, such conditions seem unreasonable on our part, after we have made them

them so many other concessions; particularly with relations to the flag and Santa Lucia; which, I think, are sufficient to make them comply with all our demands, without expecting any farther favours, and even supererogation of friendship.

Perhaps my adversaries (if they have any conceit) may take an opportunity of ridiculing me for writing in this strain; but, as it sometimes serves their turn to make me a great man, and to argue against me as such, I will for once suppose myself so; and methinks, if I had the honour of being but half an hour in that station, I could reason against such an order, for the good of my king and my country, in the following manner:

1. These troops have always been made use of, whenever there has been any attempt in favour of the pretender; and indeed they are, upon many accounts, the fittest for this purpose. They are our fellow subjects; they speak our language; are acquainted with our manners; and do not raise that aversion in the people, which they naturally conceive against other foreign troops, who understand neither. I am afraid I may add, that they are kept up, for this purpose, in entire regiments, without suffering them to be mixed with the troops of any other nation. It is well known at least, that they supplied the late king JAMES with a nursery of soldiers, who were always ready for his service, whenever any opportunity offered itself for his restoration; and that at this time, the pretender is always the bait made use of by their officers to raise recruits. They never mention the king of France, or the king of Spain, upon these occasions; but list the poor wretches under an assurance, that they are entered

into the service of him whom they call their natural and rightful king. I will not suspect the present fidelity of France, and their cordiality to the protestant establishment; yet methinks we might easily excuse ourselves from furnishing them with instruments, which they may employ against us, whenever ambition, or reasons of state, shall dissolve their present engagements, and induce them to espouse the cause of the pretender again.

2. It is very probable that his catholick majesty (who has likewise several regiments of this kind in his service) will expect the same favour of recruiting them in Ireland; and that he may, in case of refusal, make it a pretence, at any time, for quarrelling with us, interrupting our commerce, and disturbing us again in the possession of Gibraltar. And here it is proper just to take notice, that these troops did his catholick majesty the most eminent service in the last siege of that important place. He may complain, perhaps, of our partiality to France, and allege, that we do not treat Spain in the same manner we expect to be treated by them, as one of the most favoured nations.

3. The kingdom of Ireland, seems at this time, in a very ill condition to admit of any such draughts out of her dominions. She has been already so much exhausted by the voluntary transportation of multitudes of her inhabitants (who have been prevailed upon, by the calamities of their own country, to seek their bread in other parts of the world) that the interposition of parliament was found necessary to put a stop to it; and shall we suffer any foreign power to drain her still farther under such circumstances; especially in this manner, and for this purpose?

purpose? I do not hear that this license is confined to any particular number of men. It is confessed, I think, that they want above two thousand men to complete their corps; and who knows but they may design to raise a great many more than they care to own; or even to form some new regiments of these troops? But supposing they are confined to a certain number of recruits, and that Ireland were in a capacity to spare them; it is well known how easily such limitations are evaded, and how difficult it is to know when people conform exactly to the terms of their commission. This was sufficiently explained in the late famous controversy, concerning Mr. Wood's patent for supplying Ireland with a particular sum of copper halfpence; and the arguments upon that subject may be applied to this, with some allowances for the difference between the two cases. It may, perhaps, be said likewise that all the vigilance of the ministry has been hitherto found ineffectual to prevent the French from clandestinely recruiting these regiments with Irish catholicks; and therefore, that we may as well allow them to do it openly; nay, that it is our interest to let them purge Ireland of her popish inhabitants as much as they please: but I deny this for several reasons, which I shall mention presently; and if it were really the case, that the French can at any time recruit these troops clandestinely, I cannot see any reason why they should solicit an order so pressingly, for two years together, to do it openly, unless they have some other design. Ought not even this consideration to put us a little upon our guard; and is it not a tacit confession, that these troops are thought to be of more importance to them than we ought to wish? Besides, are

we to license and authorise a mischievous practice, because we cannot totally prevent it? Every one justly applauded his majesty's singular firmness and resolution in supporting the rights of his German subjects, when an attempt was made to seduce some of them into the king of Prussia's service, although perhaps it is impossible to prevent that practice entirely. We all remember that the enlisting of a miller's son, and a few other ordinary peasants, occasioned such a misunderstanding between the two crowns, as proceeded almost to a rupture. Nor was the zeal of the English parliament backward on this occasion; but on this consideration, among others, resolved to keep up a body of 12000 Hessian troops in our pay, which have already cost us above a million of money. I am confident, therefore, that the same paternal care will always influence his majesty to guard and protect his British subjects in the same manner; and if any measure should be taken, which savours too much of the French interest, and seems of dangerous consequence to the interest of his family, the world can impute it to nothing, but the deceitful representations of those, who lie under such particular obligations to the court of France, that they can refuse them nothing.

Such a license seems to give encouragement to the people of Ireland to continue Roman catholicks, since they are sure to meet with a provision both in the French and Spanish service; whereas we always reject them in our troops, and absolutely prohibit our officers to recruit in Ireland. Now, although it may not be safe to trust them in our armies, yet certainly we ought not to give the least encouragement to their entering into foreign service

vice; especially into such compact bodies as these regiments. And here it will not be amiss to relate a story much more to the honour of an English nobleman, who has also one of the largest estates in Ireland of any man in the kingdom. When he went to visit the Invalides in France, a place in the nature of our Chelsea college here, all the Irish officers and soldiers of that hospital drew out in a body to do him particular honours. We can make no question that their chief view was to have some present from his lordship; but though he has a heart as well disposed to generous charity as any man, and a purse well able to answer the dictates of it; yet, out of regard to his country, for which he has likewise the most disinterested zeal, his answer to them was only this: "Gentlemen, I am very sensible of the "honour you have done me, and heartily pity your "misfortunes; but, as you have drawn them upon "yourselves, by serving against your country, you "must not expect any relief or reward from me, for "having suffered in a service in which I wish you "had never engaged."

5. Is there not some reason to apprehend that this license may, at one time or other, prove a snare to that country, and draw many people into their destruction; for, unless it is made perpetual, can it be supposed that all the poor ignorant wretches in the kingdom should be apprised how long this license is to be in force? or when they may list with impunity, and when they may not? Besides, as it may be presumed that these officers will never go, for the future, upon such errands, without some pretended orders, when the real one is expired; so they will find it no difficult matter to impose such a

counterfeit upon illiterate people; who may thus incur the penalties of the law, without knowing any thing of the matter. Such a method of providing for persons, whose principles render them unserviceable to our army, is indeed a little more charitable than a late project for preventing Irish children from being starved, by fattening them up, and selling them to the butcher.

6. I have often heard that these troops have been made use of, in parliament, as an argument for keeping up a standing army in England; and I think we need not take any measures to render that argument stronger. God knows, there are too many arguments already upon such occasions.

I might insist upon some other points, which this affair naturally suggests to a considering mind; particularly the danger of suffering several bigotted Irish papists, in foreign service, to disperse themselves into those countries where they have the best interest, and to stroll about Ireland among their relations and old acquaintance, of the same principles with themselves. Are we sure that they will not make a bad use of this liberty, by inquiring into the strength of their party, by giving them hopes, and taking an opportunity to concert measures for the advantage of their cause? have we no reason to apprehend that they may endeavour to raise seamen as well as soldiers, under colour of this order? or engage great numbers of their countrymen to transport themselves over to the French colonies and plantations in the West Indies, which are already grown formidable to the trading interest of Great-Britain in those parts?

But whatever may be the motives to such an extraordinary

traordinary favour, or the consequences of it, I am sure it is the strongest mark of our confidence in France, and such a one, as I believe they would not place in us, upon any occasion. I will illustrate this by a parallel case.

The French protestants who fled over hither from a persecution on account of religion, never discovered any principles which were incompatible with the civil government of France, nor ever set up any pretender to the present royal family of that kingdom; and yet, if we should think fit to form any considerable number of them into complete distinct regiments, to be composed of French protestants only, and commanded by French officers, without any incorporation of British soldiers, I fancy it would give our good allies some umbrage. But I am almost confident, that they would never permit us to send over a protestant French officer from every regiment to recruit their respective corps, by dispersing themselves into those provinces where they have the best interest; or suffer a field officer, in English pay, to reside constantly in Paris, and exercise a sort of martial law in the capital of their dominions; I say, they would hardly suffer this, even though our ambassador should solicit such an order, with the utmost application, for twenty years together.

And yet the case of the Irish forces is much stronger with respect to us. They do not differ with us only in matters of religion, but hold principles absolutely destructive of our civil government; and are generally looked upon abroad as a standing army, kept on foot to serve the pretender upon any occasion.

I must

I must ask a question or two, which naturally offer themselves in this place.

What power has this field officer to exercise during his residence in Dublin? is the French martial law to take place, if any of these recruits should happen to repent of what they have done, and think fit to desert?

Troops are generally armed as soon as they are listed. Is this rule to be observed in the present case? If so, another question occurs. It has been found necessary, for the security of Ireland, to restrain all Roman catholicks from wearing, or keeping any arms in their houses. I ask, therefore, whether the authority of this license is to supersede the laws of the land; I may go farther.

The garrison of Dublin seldom consists of above 800 men for the duty of the place. Supposing double that number of popish recruits should be brought thither, in order to be viewed by their field officer, will it be said there is no just apprehension of danger? But as these suggestions may appear to be founded on the infidelity of France (a case not to be supposed at present) I press them no farther.

I must however repeat it, that this order is the fullest demonstration of the confidence we repose in them; and I hope they will scorn to make any bad use of it: but, if it were possible to suspect that they could have any design to play the knave with us, they could not wish for a better opportunity to promote it, than by such a power as is now said to be put into their hands.

I hope my remarks on this article of news will not be construed in a jacobite sense, even by the most prostitute scribblers of the present times; but I must

must beg leave to expostulate a little with the publick on that mean infamous practice, which these writers have lately used, in explaining some of my papers into treasonable libels; taking an occasion from hence to appear formally in defence of the throne, and laying it down as a point granted, that there is an actual, concerted design of setting aside the present establishment. This is a practice which may be of great service to the real enemies of the present government; and every jacobite in the kingdom may make use of it to publish the most explicit invectives on the king and his government, under the pretence of interpreting the implicit design of other writings. It is a practice which was never allowed till now, and ought never to be allowed; for whatever may be the secret meaning of any author, such explanations are certainly libels, which may have a very bad effect upon weak minds, and are punishable by the laws, without any extraordinary methods of construction. These writers ought to remember the case of sir Richard Steele, who published the pretender's declaration at the beginning of the late reign, with an answer annexed; and although he did it with a very good design, yet it was universally allowed to be contrary to law; and if his principles of loyalty had not been very well known, might have involved him in a severe prosecution. I shall make no reflections on those who encouraged such explanations; and those who are hired to do it, are beneath my notice. Let them empty all the trite common places of servile, injudicious flattery, and endeavour to make their court by such nauseous, dishonest adulation, as, I am sure, gives the most offence to those persons to whom

whom it is paid. Let them throw as much foul dirt at me as they please. Let them charge me with designs which never entered into my thoughts, and cannot justly be imputed to me from any part of my conduct. God knows my heart, I am as zealous for the welfare of the present royal family as the most sordid of these sycophants. I am sensible, that our happiness depends on the security of his majesty's title, and the preservation of the present government upon those principles which established them at the late glorious revolution; and which, I hope, will continue to actuate the conduct of Britons to the latest generations. These have always been my principles; and whoever will give himself the trouble of looking over the course of these papers, will be convinced that they have been my guide: but I am a blunt plaindealing old man, who am not afraid to speak the truth; and as I have no relish for flattery myself, I scorn to bestow it on others. I have not, however, been sparing of just praise, nor slipped any seasonable opportunity to distinguish the royal virtues of their present majesties*. More than this I cannot do; and more than this, I hope, will not be expected. Some of my expressions, perhaps, may have been thought too rough and unpolished for the climate of a court; but they flowed purely from the sincerity of my heart; and the freedom of my writings has proceeded from my zeal for the interest of my king and country.

With regard to my adversaries, I will leave every impartial reader to judge, whether, even in private life, that man is not most to be depended upon,

* King George II, and queen Caroline his consort.

who,

who, being inwardly convinced of the great and good qualities of his friend, never loads him with fulsome flatteries, but takes the honest liberty of warning him against the measures of those who are endeavouring to mislead him. The case is much stronger in publick life; and a crown is beset with so many difficulties, that even a prince of the most consummate wisdom, is not always sufficiently guarded against the dangers which surround him, from the stratagems of artful ministers, or the blunders of weak ones. Both of them may be equally bad ministers, and pursue the same methods of supporting themselves, by flattering him into measures which tend to his destruction.

But it is time to draw to a conclusion; and I can only add, that if I were really engaged in any design contrary to the interests of the present establishment, I should have sat down contented, and secretly rejoiced at the affair which occasioned this paper, instead of giving myself and the reader so much trouble.

C. D.

THE

ANSWER

TO

THE CRAFTSMAN*.

SIR,

I DETEST reading your papers, because I am not of your principles, and because I cannot endure to be convinced. Yet I was prevailed on to peruse your Craftsman of December the 12th, wherein I discover you to be as great an enemy of this country, as you are of your own. You are pleased to reflect on a project I proposed of making the children of Irish parents to be useful to the publick instead of being burdensome; and you venture to assert, that your own scheme is more charitable, of not permitting our popish natives to be listed in the service of any foreign prince.

Perhaps, sir, you may not have heard of any kingdom so unhappy as this, both in their imports and exports. We import a sort of goods, of no intrinsick value, which it costs us above forty thou-

* This Answer is a masterpiece, in the dean's usual comical manner.

sand

sand pounds a year to dress, and scour, and polish, which altogether do not yield one penny advantage; and we annually export above seven hundred thousand pounds a year in another kind of goods, for which we receive not one single farthing in return; even the money paid for letters sent in transacting this commerce being all returned to England. But now, when there is a most lucky opportunity offered to begin a trade, whereby this nation will save many thousand pounds a year, and England be a prodigious gainer, you are pleased without a call, officiously and maliciously to interpose with very frivolous arguments.

It is well known that about sixty years ago, the exportation of live cattle from hence to England was of great benefit to both kingdoms, until that branch of traffick was stopped by an act of parliament on your side, whereof you have sufficient reason to repent. Upon which account, when another act passed your parliament, forbidding the exportation of live men to any foreign country, you were so wise to put in a clause, allowing it to be done by his majesty's permission, under his sign manual, for which, among other great benefits granted to Ireland, we are infinitely obliged to the British legislature. Yet this very grace and favour you, Mr. D'Anvers, whom we never disobliged, are endeavouring to prevent; which, I will take upon me to say, is a manifest mark of your disaffection to his majesty, a want of duty to the ministry, and a wicked design of oppressing this kingdom, and a traitorous attempt to lessen the trade and manufactures of England.

Our truest and best ally, the most Christian king, has obtained his majesty's license, pursuant to law,

to export from hence some thousand bodies of healthy, young, living men, to supply his Irish regiments. The king of Spain, as you assert yourself, has desired the same civility, and seems to have at least as good a claim; supposing then that these two potentates will only desire leave to carry off six thousand men between them to France and Spain, then by computing the maintenance of a tall, hungry, Irishman, in food and clothes, to be only at five pounds a head, here will be thirty thousand pounds *per annum* saved clear to the nation; for they can find no other employment at home, beside begging, robbing, or stealing. But, if thirty, forty, or fifty thousand (which we would gladly spare) were sent on the same errand, what an immense benefit it must be to us! and if the two princes, in whose service they were, should happen to be at war with each other, how soon would those recruits be destroyed! then what a number of friends would the pretender lose, and what a number of popish enemies all true protestants get rid of! Add to this, that then, by such a practice, the lands of Ireland, that want hands for tillage, must be employed in grazing, which would sink the price of wool, raw hides, butter, and tallow, so that the English might have them at their own rates; and in return send us wheat to make our bread, barley to brew our drink, and oats for our horses, without any labour of our own.

Upon this occasion, I desire humbly to offer a scheme, which, in my opinion, would best answer the true interests of both kingdoms: For, although I bear a most tender filial affection for England, my dear native country; yet, I cannot deny but this noble island has a great share in my love and esteem;

nor

nor can I express how much I desire to see it flourish in trade and opulence, even beyond its present happy condition.

The profitable land of this kingdom is, I think, usually computed at seventeen millions of acres, all of which I propose to be wholly turned to grazing. Now, it is found by experience, that one grazier and his family can manage two thousand acres. Thus, sixteen millions eight hundred thousand acres may be managed by eight thousand four hundred families; and the fraction of two hundred thousand acres will be more than sufficient for cabins, outhouses, and potatoe gardens; because it is to be understood that corn of all sorts must be sent to us from England.

These eight thousand four hundred families may be divided among the four provinces, according to the number of houses in each province; and making the equal allowance of eight to a family, the number of inhabitants will amount to sixty-seven thousand two hundred souls; to these we are to add a standing army of twenty thousand English; which, together with their trulls, their bastards, and their horseboys, will, by a gross computation, very near double the count, and be very sufficient for the defence and grazing of the kingdom, as well as to enrich our neighbours, expel popery, and keep out the pretender. And lest the army should be at a loss for business, I think it would be very prudent to employ them in collecting the publick taxes for paying themselves and the civil list.

I advise, that all our owners of these lands should live constantly in England, in order to learn politeness, and qualify themselves for employments; but, for fear of increasing the natives in this island, that

an annual draught, according to the number born every year, be exported to whatever place will bear the carriage, or transplanted to the English dominions on the American continent, as a screen between his majesty's English subjects and the savage Indians.

I advise likewise, that no commodity whatsoever, of this nation's growth, should be sent to any other country, except England, under the penalty of high treason; and that all the said commodities shall be sent in their natural state, the hides raw, the wool uncombed, the flax in the stub; excepting only fish, butter, tallow, and whatever else will be spoiled in the carriage. On the contrary, that no goods whatsoever shall be imported hither, except from England, under the same penalty: That England should be forced, at their own rates, to send us over clothes ready made, as well as shirts and smocks, to the soldiers and their trulls; all iron, wooden, and earthen ware; and whatever furniture may be necessary for the cabins of graziers, with a sufficient quantity of gin, and other spirits, for those who can afford to get drunk on holidays.

As to the civil and ecclesiastical administration, which I have not yet fully considered, I can say little; only with regard to the latter, it is plain, that the article of paying tithe for supporting speculative opinions in religion, which is so insupportable a burden to all true protestants, and to most churchmen, will be very much lessened by this expedient; because dry cattle pay nothing to the spiritual hireling, any more than imported corn; so that the industrious shepherd and cowherd may sit every man under his own blackberry bush, and on his own

potatoe

potatoe bed, whereby this happy island will become a new Arcadia.

I do likewise propose, that no money shall be used in Ireland, except what is made of leather, which likewise shall be coined in England, and imported; and that the taxes shall be levied out of the commodities we export for England, and there turned into money for his majesty's use; and the rents to landlords discharged in the same manner. This will be no manner of grievance, for we already see it very practicable to live without money, and shall be more convinced of it every day. But whether paper shall continue to supply that defect, or whether we shall hang up all those who profess the trade of bankers (which latter I am rather inclined to) must be left to the consideration of wiser politicians.

That which makes me more zealously bent upon this scheme, is, my desire of living in amity with our neighbouring brethren; for we have already tried all other means, without effect, to that blessed end: and, by the course of measures taken for some years past, it should seem that we are all agreed in the point.

This expedient will be of great advantage to both kingdoms, upon several accounts: For, as to England, they have a just claim to the balance of trade on their side with the whole world: and therefore our ancestors and we, who conquered this kingdom for them, ought, in duty and gratitude, to let them have the whole benefit of that conquest to themselves; especially, when the conquest was amicably made without bloodshed, by stipulation between the Irish princes and Henry II; by which they paid him, indeed, not equal homage with what

the electors of Germany do to the emperor, but very near the same that he did to the king of France, for his French dominions.

In consequence of this claim from England, that kingdom may very reasonably demand the benefit of all our commodities in their natural growth, to be manufactured by their people, and a sufficient quantity of them for our use to be returned hither fully manufactured.

This, on the other side, will be of great benefit to our inhabitants the graziers; when time and labour will be too much taken up in manuring their ground, feeding their cattle, sheering their sheep, and sending over their oxen fit for slaughter; to which employments they are turned by nature, as descended from the Scythians, whose diet they are still so fond of. So Virgil describes it:

Et lac concretum cum sanguine libet equino.

Which in English, is bonnyclabber*, mingled with the blood of horses, as they formerly did, until about the beginning of the last century; when luxury, under the form of politeness, began to creep in, they changed the blood of horses for that of their black cattle; and, by consequence, became less warlike than their ancestors.

Although I proposed that the army should be collectors of the publick revenues, yet I did not thereby intend that those taxes should be paid in gold or silver; but in kind, as all other rent: For, the custom of tenants making their payments in money, is a new thing in the world, little known in former ages,

* Thick, sour milk.

nor generally practised in any nation at present, except this island and the southern parts of Britain. But, to my great satisfaction, I foresee better times; the ancient manner begins to be now practised in many parts of Connaught, as well as in the county of Corke; where the squires turn tenants to themselves, divide so many cattle to their slaves, who are to provide such a quantity of butter, hides, or tallow, still keeping up their number of cattle; and carry the goods to Corke, or other port towns, and then sell them to merchants. By which invention there is no such thing as a ruined farmer to be seen; but the people live with comfort on potatoes and bonny-clabber, neither of which are vendible commodities abroad.

A

PROPOSAL

THAT

ALL THE LADIES AND WOMEN OF IRELAND SHOULD APPEAR CONSTANTLY IN IRISH MANUFACTURES.

WRITTEN IN MDCCXXIX.

THERE was a treatise written about nine years ago, to persuade the people of Ireland to wear their own manufactures. This treatise was allowed to have not one syllable in it of party or disaffection; but was wholly founded upon the growing poverty of the nation, occasioned by the utter want of trade, except the ruinous importation of all foreign extravagances from other countries. This treatise was presented, by the grand jury of the city and county of Dublin, as a scandalous, seditious, and factious pamphlet. I forgot who was the foreman of the city grand jury: but the foreman for the county was one Dr. Seal, register to the archbishop of Dublin, wherein he differed much from the sentiments of his lord. The printer was tried before the late Mr. Whitshed, that famous lord chief justice; who, on the bench, laying his hand on his heart, declared, upon his salvation,

salvation, " That the author was a jacobite, and had " a design to beget a quarrel between the two na- " tions." In the midst of this prosecution, about fifteen hundred weavers were forced to beg their bread, and had a general contribution made for their relief, which just served to make them drunk for a week; and then they were forced to turn rogues, or strolling beggars, or to leave the kingdom.

The duke of Grafton, who was then lieutenant, being perfectly ashamed of so infamous and unpopular a proceeding, obtained from England a *noli prosequi* for the printer. Yet the grand jury had solemn thanks given them from the secretary of state.

I mention this passage (perhaps too much forgotten) to show how dangerous it has been for the best meaning person to write one syllable in the defence of his country, or discover the miserable condition it is in.

And to prove this truth, I will produce one instance more: wholly omitting the famous cause of the drapier, and the proclamation against him, as well as the perverseness of another jury against the same Mr. Whitshed, who was violently bent to act the second part in another scene.

About two years ago, there was a small paper printed, which was called, ' A Short View of the State of Ireland,' relating to the several causes whereby any country may grow rich, and applying them to Ireland. Whitshed was dead, and consequently the printer was not troubled. Mist, the famous journalist, happened to reprint this paper in London, for which his pressfolk were prosecuted for almost

a twelvemonth; and, for aught I know, are not yet discharged.

This is our case; insomuch, that although I am often without money in my pocket, I dare not own it in some company, for fear of being thought disaffected.

But, since I am determined to take care that the author of this paper shall not be discovered, (following herein the most prudent practice of the drapier) I will venture to affirm, that the three seasons wherein our corn has miscarried, did no more contribute to our present misery, than one spoonful of water thrown upon a rat already drowned, would contribute to his death: and that the present plentiful harvest, although it should be followed by a dozen ensuing, would no more restore us, than it would the rat aforesaid, to put him near the fire, which might indeed warm his fur coat, but never bring him back to life.

The short of the matter is this: The distresses of the kingdom are operating more and more every day, by very large degrees, and so have been doing for above a dozen years past.

If you demand whence these distresses have arisen, I desire to ask the following question:

If two thirds of any kingdom's revenue be exported to another country, without one farthing of value in return; and if the said kingdom be forbidden the most profitable branches of trade wherein to employ the other third, and only allowed to traffick in importing those commodities which are most ruinous to itself; how shall that kingdom stand?

If this question were formed into the first proposi-

tion

tion of an hypothetical syllogism. I defy the man born in Ireland, who is now in the fairest way of getting a collectorship, or a cornet's post, to give good reason for denying it.

Let me put another case. Suppose a gentleman's estate of two hundred pounds a year should sink to one hundred, by some accident, whether by an earthquake, or inundation, it matters not; and suppose the said gentleman, utterly hopeless and unqualified ever to retrieve the loss; how is he otherwise to proceed in his future economy, than by reducing it on every article to one half less, unless he will be content to fly his country, or rot in gaol? This is a representation of Ireland's condition; only with one fault, that it is a little too favourable. Neither am I able to propose a full remedy for this, but only a small prolongation of life, until God shall miraculously dispose the hearts of our neighbours and our kinsmen, our fellow protestants, fellow subjects, and fellow rational creatures, to permit us to starve without running farther in debt. I am informed that our national debt (and God knows how we wretches came by that fashionable thing a national debt) is about two hundred and fifty thousand pounds; which is, at least, one third of the whole kingdom's rents, after our absentees and other foreign drains are paid, and about fifty thousand pounds more than all the cash.

It seems there are several schemes for raising a fund to pay the interest of this formidable sum, not the principal, for this is allowed impossible. The necessity of raising such a fund, is strongly and regularly pleaded, from the late deficiencies in the duties and customs. And is it a fault of Ireland that

that these funds are deficient? If they depend on trade, can it possibly be otherwise, while we have neither liberty to trade, nor money to trade with; neither hands to work, nor business to employ them if we had? Our diseases are visible enough, both in their causes and effects; and the cures are well known, but impossible to be applied.

If my steward comes and tells me, "that my rents "are sunk so low, that they are very little more "than sufficient to pay my servants their wages;" have I any other course left, than to cashier four in six of my rascally footmen, and a number of other varlets in my family, of whose insolence the whole neighbourhood complains? And I would think it extremely severe in any law, to force me to maintain a household of fifty servants, and fix their wages, before I had offered my rent-roll upon oath to the legislators.

To return from digressing: I am told one scheme for raising a fund to pay the interest of our national debt, is, by a farther duty of forty shillings a tun upon wine. Some gentlemen would carry this matter much farther, by raising it to twelve pounds; which, in a manner, would amount to a prohibition; thus weakly arguing from the practice of England.

I have often taken notice, both in print and in discourse, that there is no topick so fallacious, either in talk or in writing, as to argue how we ought to act in Ireland, from the example of England, Holland, France, or any other country, whose inhabitants are allowed the common rights and liberties of human kind. I could undertake to name six or seven of the most uncontrolled maxims in government, which are utterly false in this kingdom.

As

As to the additional duty on wine, I think any person may deliver his opinion upon it, until it shall have passed into a law; and, till then, I declare mine to be positively against it.

First, Because there is no nation yet known, in either hemisphere, where the people of all conditions are more in want of some cordial, to keep up their spirits, than in this of ours. I am not in jest; and if the fact will not be allowed me, I shall not argue it.

Secondly, It is too well and generally known, that this tax of forty shillings additional on every tun of wine, (which will be double at least to the home consumer) will increase equally every new session of parliament, until perhaps it comes to twelve pounds.

Thirdly, Because, as the merchants inform me, and as I have known many the like instances in England, this additional tax will more probably lessen this branch of the revenue, than increase it. And therefore sir John Stanley, a commissioner of the customs in England, used to say, "That the house "of commons were generally mistaken in matters of "trade, by an erroneous opinion that two and two "make four." Thus if you should lay an additional duty of one penny a pound on raisins or sugar, the revenue, instead of rising, would certainly sink; and the consequence would only be, to lessen the number of plumpuddings, and ruin the confectioner.

Fourthly, I am likewise assured by merchants, that upon this additional forty shillings, the French will at least equally raise their duties upon all commodities we export thither.

Fifthly, If an original extract of the exports and imports

imports be true, we have been gainers, upon the balance, by our trade with France for several years past: and, although our gain amounts to no great sum, we ought to be satisfied, since we are no losers, with the only consolation we are capable of receiving.

Lastly, The worst consequence is behind. If we raise the duty on wine to a considerable height, we lose the only hold we have of keeping among us the few gentlemen of any tolerable estates. I am confident, there is hardly a gentleman of eight hundred pounds a year and upward, in this kingdom, who would balance half an hour to consider whether he should live here, or in England, if a family could be as cheaply maintained in the one as the other. As to estates, they are as cheap in many fine counties of England, as in some very indifferent ones here: or, if there be any difference, that vein of thrift, and prudence in economy, which passes there without reproach, (and chiefly in London itself) would amply make up the difference. But the article of French wine is hardly tolerable, in any degree of plenty, to a middling fortune: and this it is, which by growing habitual, wholly turns the scale with those few landed men, disengaged from employments, who content themselves to live hospitably, with plenty of good wine in their own country, rather than in penury and obscurity in another, with bad, or with none at all.

Having therefore, as far as in me lies, abolished this additional duty upon wine; for I am not under the least concern about paying the interest of the national debt, but leave it, as in loyalty bound, wholly to the wisdom of the honourable house of commons; I come now to consider, by what methods,

thods, we may be able to put off and delay our utter undoing, as long as it is possible.

I never have discoursed with any reasonable man upon the subject, who did not allow that there was no remedy left us, but to lessen the importation of all unnecessary commodities, as much as it was possible; and likewise either to persuade our absentees to spend their money at home, which is impossible; or tax them at five shillings in the pound during their absence, with such allowances, upon necessary occasions, as shall be thought convenient; or, by permitting us a free trade, which is denied to no other nation upon earth. The three last methods are treated by Mr. Prior, in his most useful treatise, added to his list of absentees.

It is to gratify the vanity and pride and luxury of the women, and of the young fops who admire them, that we owe this insupportable grievance, of bringing in the instruments of our ruin. There is annually brought over to this kingdom, near ninety thousand pounds worth of silk, whereof the greater part is manufactured. Thirty thousand pounds more, expended in muslin, holland, cambrick, and callico. What the price of lace amounts to, is not easy to be collected from the custom house book, being a kind of goods that takes up little room, and is easily run; but, considering the prodigious price of a woman's headdress, at ten, twelve, twenty pounds a yard, must be very great. The tea, rated at seven shillings per pound, comes to near twelve thousand pounds; but, considering it as the common luxury of every chambermaid, semstress, and tradesman's wife, both in town and country, however they come by it, must needs cost the kingdom double that sum.

Coffee

Coffee is somewhat above seven thousand pounds. I have seen no account of chocolate, and some other Indian or American goods. The drapery imported is about four and twenty thousand pounds. The whole amounts (with one or two other particulars) to one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. The lavishing of all which money is just as prudent and necessary, as to see a man in an embroidered coat, begging out of Newgate in an old shoe.

I allow that the thrown and raw silk is less pernicious; because we have some share in the manufacture: but we are not now in circumstances to trifle. It costs us above forty thousand pounds a year; and if the ladies, till better times, will not be content to go in their own country shifts, I wish they may go in rags. Let them vie with each other in the fineness of their native linen: their beauty and gentleness will as well appear, as if they were covered over with diamonds and brocade.

I believe no man is so weak, as to hope or expect that such a reformation can be brought about by a law. But a thorough hearty unanimous vote, in both houses of parliament, might perhaps answer as well: every senator, noble or plebeian, giving his honour, "That neither himself, nor any of his family would, "in their dress or furniture of their houses, make "use of any thing except what was of the growth "and manufacture of this kingdom; and that they "would use the utmost of their power, influence, "and credit, to prevail on their tenants, dependants, and friends, to follow their example."

A

LETTER

TO

THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN*

CONCERNING THE WEAVERS.

MY LORD,

THE corporation of weavers in the woollen manufacture, who have so often attended your grace, and called upon me with their schemes and proposals, were with me on Thursday last; when he who spoke for the rest, and in the name of his absent brethren, said, "It was the opinion of the whole "body, that if somewhat were written at this time, "by an able hand, to persuade the people of this "kingdom to wear their own woollen manufactures, "it might be of good use to the nation in general, "and preserve many hundreds of their trade from "starving." To which I answered, "That it was "hard for any man of common spirit, to turn his "thoughts to such speculations, without discovering "a resentment, which people are too delicate to

* Dr. William King.

"bear."

" bear." For I will not deny to your grace, that I cannot reflect on the singular condition of this country, different from all others upon the face of the earth, without some emotion; and without often examining, as I pass the streets, whether those animals which come in my way, with two legs and human faces, clad and erect, be of the same species, with what I have seen very like them in England as to the outward shape, but differing in their notions, natures, and intellectuals, more than any two kinds of brutes in a forest; which any man of common prudence would immediately discover, by persuading them to define what they mean by law, liberty, property, courage, reason, loyalty, or religion.

One thing, my lord, I am very confident of; that if God Almighty, for our sins, would most justly send us a pestilence, whoever should dare to discover his grief in publick for such a visitation, would certainly be censured for disaffection to the government: for I solemnly profess, that I do not know one calamity we have undergone these many years, which any man, whose opinions were not in fashion, dared to lament, without being openly charged with that imputation. And this is the harder, because although a mother, when she has corrected her child, may sometimes force it to kiss the rod, yet she will never give that power to the footboy or the scullion.

My lord, there are two things for the people of this kingdom to consider: first, their present evil condition; and, secondly, what can be done in some degree to remedy it.

I shall not enter into a particular description of our present misery: it has been already done in several papers, and very fully in one entitled, " A

" short

" short View of the State of Ireland." It will be enough to mention the entire want of trade, the navigation act executed with the utmost rigour, the remission of a million every year to England, the ruinous importation of foreign luxury and vanity, the oppression of landlords, and discouragement of agriculture.

Now all these evils are without the possibility of a cure, except that of importations; and to fence against ruinous folly, will be always in our power, in spite of the discouragements, mortifications, contempt, hatred, and opposition, we labour under: but our trade will never mend, the navigation act never be softened, our absentees never return, our endless foreign payments never be lessened, our own landlords never be less exacting.

All other schemes for preserving this kingdom from utter ruin, are idle and visionary; consequently drawn from wrong reasoning, and from general topicks, which, for the same causes that they may be true in all nations, are certainly false in ours; as I have told the publick often enough, but with as little effect, as what I shall say at present is likely to produce.

I am weary of so many abortive projects for the advancement of trade; of so many crude proposals, in letters sent me from unknown hands; of so many contradictory speculations, about raising or sinking the value of gold and silver: I am not in the least sorry to hear of the great numbers going to America, although very much for the causes that drive them from us, since the uncontrolled maxim, "That people " are the riches of a nation," is no maxim here under

our circumstances. We have neither manufactures to employ them about, nor food to support them.

If a private gentleman's income be sunk irretrievably for ever, from a hundred pounds to fifty, and he has no other method to supply the deficiency; I desire to know, my lord, whether such a person has any other course to take, than to sink half his expenses in every article of economy, to save himself from ruin and a gaol. Is not this more than doubly the case of Ireland, where the want of money, the irretrievable ruin of trade, with the other evils abovementioned, and many more too well known and felt, and too numerous or invidious to be related, have been gradually sinking us, for above a dozen years past, to a degree, that we are at least by two thirds in a worse condition, than was ever known since the revolution? Therefore, instead of dreams and projects for the advancing of trade, we have nothing left but to find out some expedient, whereby we may reduce our expenses to our incomes.

Yet this procedure, allowed so necessary in all private families, and in its own nature so easy to be put in practice, may meet with strong opposition, by the cowardly slavish indulgence of the men, to the intolerable pride, arrogance, vanity, and luxury of the women; who, strictly adhering to the rules of modern education, seem to employ their whole stock of invention in contriving new arts of profusion, faster than the most parsimonious husband can afford: and, to compass this work the more effectually, their universal maxim is, to despise and detest every thing of the growth of their own country, and most to value whatever comes from the very remotest

parts

parts of the globe. And I am convinced, that if the virtuosi could once find out a world in the moon, with a passage to it, our women would wear nothing but what came directly from thence.

The prime cost of wine yearly imported to Ireland, is valued at thirty thousand pounds; and the tea (including coffee and chocolate) at five times that sum. The lace, silks, calicoes, and all other unnecessary ornaments for women including English cloths and stuffs, added to the former articles, make up (to compute grossly) about four hundred thousand pounds.

Now if we should allow the thirty thousand pounds wherein the women have their share, and which is all we have to comfort us, and deduct seventy thousand pounds more for overreaching, there would still remain three hundred thousand pounds annually spent, for unwholesome drugs and unnecessary finery: which prodigious sum would be wholly saved, and many thousands of our miserable shopkeepers and manufacturers comfortably supported.

Let speculative people busy their brains as much as they please, there is no other way to prevent this kingdom from sinking for ever, than by utterly renouncing all foreign dress and luxury.

It is absolutely so in fact, that every husband of any fortune in the kingdom, is nourishing a poisonous devouring serpent in his bosom, with all the mischief, but with none of its wisdom.

If all the women were clad with the growth of their own country, they might still vie with each other in the course of foppery; and still have room left to vie with each other, and equally show their wit and judgment, in deciding upon the variety of Irish stuffs. And if they could be contented with

their native wholesome slops for breakfast, we should hear no more of the spleen, hystericks, colicks, palpitations, and asthmas. They might still be allowed to ruin each other and their husbands at play, because the money lost would only circulate among ourselves.

My lord, I freely own it a wild imagination, that any words will cure the sottishness of men, or the vanity of women: but the kingdom is in a fair way of producing the most effectual remedy, when there will not be money left for the common course of buying and selling the very necessaries of life in our markets, unless we absolutely change the whole method of our proceedings.

The corporation of weavers in woollen and silk, who have so frequently offered proposals both to your grace and to me, are the hottest and coldest generation of men that I have known. About a month ago, they attended your grace, when I had the honour to be with you; and designed me the same favour. They desired you would recommend to your clergy to wear gowns of Irish stuffs, which might probably spread the example among all their brethren in the kingdom; and, perhaps, among the lawyers and gentlemen of the university, and among the citizens of those corporations who appear in gowns on solemn occasions. I then mentioned a kind of stuff, not above eight pence a yard, which I heard had been contrived by some of the trade, and was very convenient. I desired they would prepare some of that, or any sort of black stuff, on a certain day, when your grace would appoint as many clergymen as could readily be found to meet at your palace, and there give their opinions; and that your grace's visitation approaching, you could then have

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the best opportunity of seeing what could be done in a matter of such consequence, as they seemed to think, to the woollen manufacture. But, instead of attending, as was expected, they came to me a fortnight after with a new proposal that, something should be written, by an acceptable and able hand, to promote in general the wearing of home manufactures; and their civilities would fix that work upon me. I asked if they had prepared the stuffs, as they had promised, and your grace expected; but they had not made the least step in the matter, nor, as it appears, thought of it more.

I did, some years ago, propose to the masters and principal dealers in the home manufactures of silk and wool, that they should meet together; and after mature consideration, publish advertisements to the following purpose.

That in order to encourage the wearing of Irish manufactures in silk and woollen, they gave notice to the nobility and gentry of the kingdom, That they, the undersigned, would enter into bonds, for themselves and for each other, to sell the several sorts of stuffs, cloths, and silks, made to the best perfection they were able, for certain fixed prices; and in such a manner, that if a child were sent to any of their shops, the buyer might be secure of the value and goodness, and measure of the ware: and, least this might be thought to look like a monopoly, any other member of the trade might be admitted, upon such conditions as should be agreed on. And if any person whatsoever should complain that he was ill used, in the value and goodness of what he bought, the matter should be examined, the person injured be fully satisfied by the whole corporation

without delay, and the dishonest seller be struck out of the society, unless it appeared evidently that the failure proceeded only from mistake.

The mortal danger is, that if these dealers could prevail, by the goodness and cheapness of their cloths and stuffs, to give a turn to the principal people of Ireland in favour of their goods; they would relapse into the knavish practice, peculiar to this kingdom, which is apt to run through all trades, even so low as a common aleseller; who, as soon as he gets a vogue for his liquor, and outsells his neighbours, thinks his credit will put off the worst he can buy, till his customers will come no more. Thus I have known at London, in a general mourning, the drapers dye black all their old damaged goods, and sell them at double rates; then complain, and petition the court, that they are ready to starve by the continuance of the mourning.

Therefore, I say, those principal weavers who would enter into such a compact as I have mentioned, must give sufficient security against all such practices: for, if once the women can persuade their husbands that foreign goods, beside the finery, will be as cheap, and do more service, our last state will be worse than the first.

I do not here pretend to digest perfectly the method by which these principal shopkeepers shall proceed, in such a proposal: but my meaning is clear enough, and cannot reasonably be objected against.

We have seen what a destructive loss the kingdom received, by the detestable fraud of the merchants, or northern linenweavers, or both; notwithstanding all the care of the governors at that board, when we had an offer of commerce with the Spaniards for

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our linen, to the value, as I am told, of thirty thousand pounds a year. But, while we deal like pedlars, we shall practise like pedlars, and sacrifice all honesty to the present urging advantage.

What I have said may serve as an answer to the desire made me by the corporation of weavers, that I would offer my notions to the publick. As to any thing farther, let them apply themselves to the parliament in their next session. Let them prevail on the house of commons to grant one very reasonable request; and I shall think there is still some spirit left in the nation, when I read a vote to this purpose: "Resolved, *nemine contradicente*, That this house "will, for the future, wear no cloths but such as "are made of Irish growth or of Irish manufacture, "nor will permit their wives or children to wear "any other; and that they will, to the utmost, "endeavour to prevail with their friends, relations, "dependents, and tenants, to follow their example." And if, at the same time, they could banish tea and coffee, and chinaware, out of their families, and force their wives to chat their scandal over an infusion of sage, or other wholesome domestick vegetables, we might possibly be able to subsist, and pay our absentees, pensioners, generals, civil officers, appeals, colliers, temporary travellers, students, schoolboys, splenetick visitors of Bath, Tunbridge, and Epsom, with all other smaller drains, by sending our crude unwrought goods to England, and receiving from thence, and all other countries, nothing but what is fully manufactured, and keep a few potatoes and oatmeal for our own subsistence.

I have been for a dozen years past wisely prognosticating the present condition of this kingdom;

which any human creature of common sense could foretel, with as little sagacity as myself. My meaning is, that a consumptive body must needs die, which has spent all its spirits, and received no nourishment. Yet I am often tempted to pity, when I hear the poor farmer and cottager lamenting the hardness of the times, and imputing them either to one or two ill seasons, which better climates than ours are more exposed to; or to scarcity of silver, which, to a nation of liberty, would only be a slight and temporary inconvenience, to be removed at a month's warning.

ANSWER

TO SEVERAL

LETTERS FROM UNKNOWN PERSONS.

WRITTEN IN MDCCXXIX.

GENTLEMEN,

I AM inclined to think that I received a letter from you two* last summer, directed to Dublin, while I was in the country, whither it was sent me: and I ordered an answer to it to be printed; but, it seems, it had little effect, and I suppose this will have not much more. But the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed. And, gentlemen, I am to tell you another thing; that the world is too regardless of what we write for the publick good: that after we have delivered our thoughts, without any prospect of advantage, or of reputation, which latter is not to be had but by subscribing our names, we cannot prevail upon a printer to be at the charge of sending it into the world, unless we will be at all or half the expense: and although we

* Tisdall and Layfield.

are

are willing enough to bestow our labours, we think it unreasonable to be out of pocket; because it probably may not consist with the situation of our affairs.

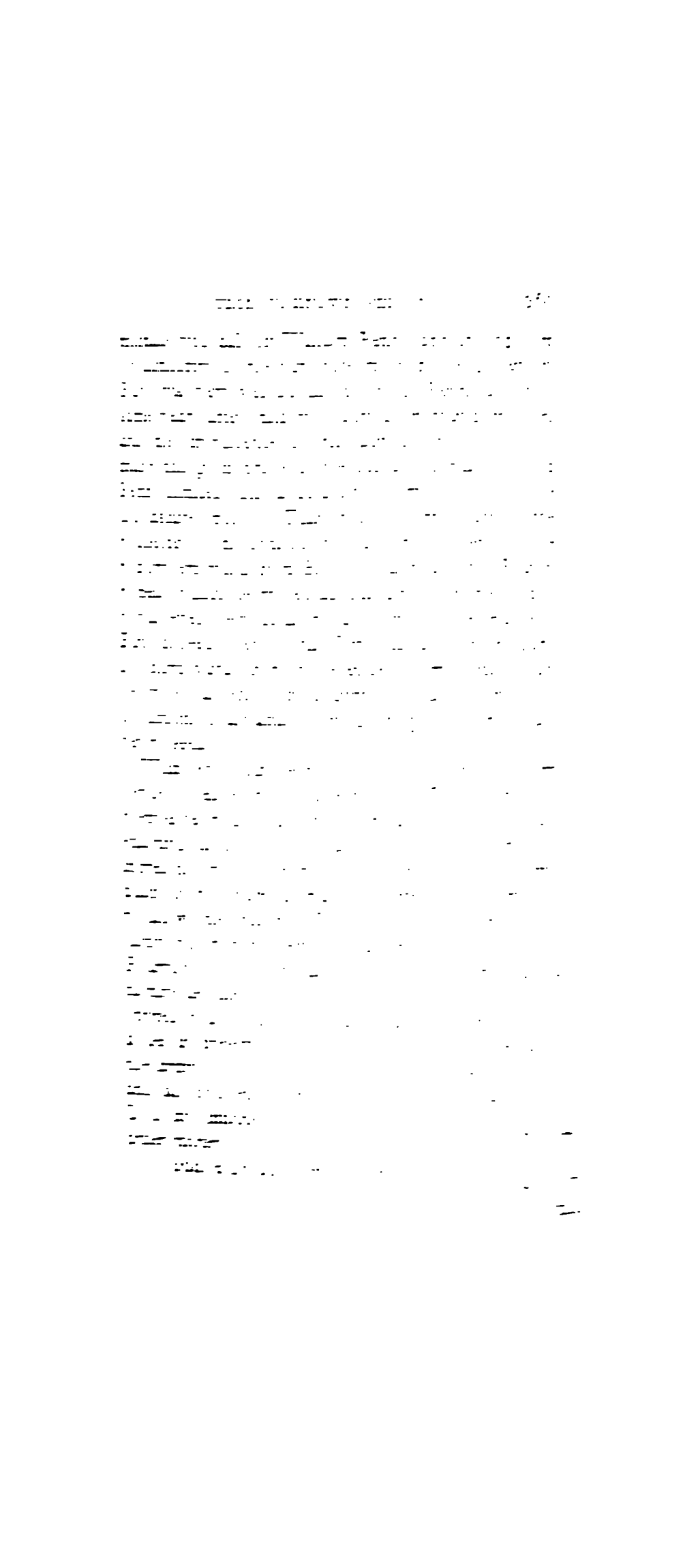
I do very much approve your good intentions, and in a great measure, your manner of declaring them; and I do imagine you intended that the world should not only know your sentiments, but my answer, which I shall impartially give.

That great prelate, in whose cover you directed your letter, sent it to me this morning; and I begin my answer to night, not knowing what interruption I may meet with.

I have ordered your letter to be printed, as it ought to be, along with my answer; because I conceive, it will be more acceptable and informing to the kingdom.

I shall therefore now go on to answer your letter in all manner of sincerity.

Although your letter be directed to me, yet I take myself to be only an imaginary person: for, although I conjecture I had formerly one from you, yet I never answered it otherwise than in print; neither was I at a loss to know the reasons why so many people of this kingdom were transporting themselves to America. And if this encouragement were owing to a pamphlet written, giving an account of the country of Pennsylvania, to tempt people to go thither; I do declare, that those who were tempted, by such a narrative, to such a journey, were fools, and the author a most impudent knave; at least, if it be the same pamphlet I saw when it first came out, which is above twenty-five years ago, dedicated to William Penn (whom by a mistake



men of spirit, who desire and expect, and think they deserve the common privileges of human nature, would be of more force than any you have yet named, to drive them out of this kingdom. But, as these speculations may probably not much affect the brains of your people, I shall choose to let them pass unmentioned. Yet, I cannot but observe, that my very good and virtuous friend, his excellency Burnet* *(O fili, nec tali indigne parente!)* has not hitherto been able to persuade his vassals, by his oratory in the style of a commander, to settle a revenue on his viceroyal person. I have been likewise assured, that in one of those colonies on the continent, which nature has so far favoured, as (by the industry of the inhabitants) to produce a great quantity of excellent rice, the stubborn people, having been told that the world was wide, took it into their heads that they might sell their own rice at whatever foreign market they pleased, and seem, by their practice, very unwilling to quit that opinion.

But, to return to my subject: I must confess to you both, that if one reason of your people's deserting us, be, the despair of things growing better in their own country, I have not one syllable answer; because that would be to hope for what impossible; and so I have been telling the publ these ten years. For there are three events wh must precede any such blessing: First, A liber trade; secondly, A share of preferments in all k equal to the British natives; and thirdly, A re of those absentees, who take away almost one

* Son to the bishop of Salisbury.

of the kingdom's revenue. As to the first and second, there is nothing left us but despair; and for the third, it will never happen till the kingdom has no money to send them, for which, in my own particular, I shall not be sorry.

The exaction of landlords has indeed been a grievance of above twenty years standing. But, as to what you object about the severe clauses relating to the improvement, the fault lies wholly on the other side: for, the landlords, either by their ignorance, or greediness of making large rent-rolls, have performed this matter so ill, as we see by experience, that there is not one tenant in five hundred, who has made any improvement worth mentioning: for which I appeal to any man who rides through the kingdom, where little is to be found among the tenants but beggary and desolation; the cabins of the Scotch themselves, in Ulster, being as dirty and miserable as those of the wildest Irish. Whereas good firm penal clauses for improvement, with a tolerable easy rent, and a reasonable period of time, would, in twenty years, have increased the rents of Ireland at least a third part of the intrinsick value.

I am glad to hear you speak with some decency of the clergy, and to impute the exactions you lament to the managers or farmers of the tithes. But you entirely mistake the fact: for I defy the most wicked, and the most powerful clergyman in the kingdom, to oppress the meanest farmer in the parish; and I defy the same clergyman to prevent himself from being cheated by the same farmer, whenever that farmer shall be disposed to be knavish or peevish. For, although the Ulster tithing-teller is more advantageous

vantageous to the clergy, than any other in the kingdom, yet the minister can demand no more than his tenth; and where the corn much exceeds the small tithes, as, except in some districts, I am told it always does, he is at the mercy of every stubborn farmer, especially of those, whose sect as well as interests, incline them to opposition. However, I take it that your people bent for America do not show the best side of their prudence, in making this, one part of their complaint: yet they are so far wise, as not to make the payment of tithes a scruple of conscience, which is too gross for a protestant dissenter, except a quaker, to pretend. But do your people indeed think, that if tithes were abolished, or delivered into the hands of the landlord, after the blessed manner in the Scotch spiritual economy, the tenant would sit easier in his rent under the same person, who must be lord of the soil and of the tithe together?

I am ready enough to grant, that the oppression of landlords, the utter ruin of trade, with its necessary consequences, the want of money, half the revenues of the kingdom spent abroad, the continued dearth of three years, and the strong delusion in your people by false allurement from America, may be the chief motives of their eagerness after such an expedition. But, there is likewise another temptation, which is not of inconsiderable weight; which is, their itch of living in a country where their sect is predominant, and where their eyes and conscience will not be offended by the stumbling block of ceremonies, habits, and spiritual titles. But I was surprised to find that those calamities, whereof we are innocent, have been sufficient to drive many fami

out of their country, who had no reason to complain of oppressive landlords. For, while I was last year in the northern parts, a person of quality, whose estate was let above twenty years ago, and then at a very reasonable rent, some for leases of lives, and some perpetuities, did, in a few months, purchase eleven of those leases at a very inconsiderable price, although they were two years ago reckoned to pay but half value. Whence it is manifest that our present miserable condition, and the dismal prospect of worse, with other reasons above assigned, are sufficient to put men upon trying this desperate experiment, of changing the scene they are in, although landlords should, by a miracle, become less inhuman.

There is hardly a scheme proposed for improving the trade of this kingdom, which does not manifestly show the stupidity and ignorance of the proposer: and I laugh with contempt at those weak wise heads, who proceed upon general maxims, or advise us to follow the examples of Holland and England. These empiricks talk by rote, without understanding the constitution of the kingdom: as if a physician, knowing that exercise contributed much to health, should prescribe to his patient under a severe fit of the gout, to walk ten miles every morning. The directions for Ireland are very short and plain; to encourage agriculture and home consumption, and utterly discard all importations which are not absolutely necessary for health or life. And how few necessaries, conveniencies, or even comforts of life, are denied us by nature, or not to be attained by labour and industry! Are those detestable extravagancies of Flanders lace, English cloths made of our own

own wool, and other goods, Italian or Indian silks, tea, coffee, chocolate, chinaware, and that profusion of wines, by the knavery of merchants growing dearer every season, with a hundred unnecessary fopperies, better known to others than me; are these, I say, fit for us, any more than for the beggar who could not eat his veal without oranges? Is it not the highest indignity to human nature, that men should be such poltroons, as to suffer the kingdom and themselves to be undone, by the vanity, the folly, the pride, and wantonness of their wives, who, under their present corruptions, seem to be a kind of animal suffered, for our sins, to be sent into the world for the destruction of families, societies, and kingdoms; and whose whole study seems directed to be as expensive as they possibly can, in every useless article of living; who, by long practice, can reconcile the most pernicious foreign drugs to their health and pleasure, provided they are but expensive, as starlings grow fat with henbane; who contract a robustness by mere practice of sloth and luxury; who can play deep several hours after midnight, sleep beyond noon, revel upon Indian poisons, and spend the revenues of a moderate family, to adorn a nauseous, unwholesome living carcase? Let those few who are not concerned in any part of this accusation, suppose it unsaid; let the rest take it among them. Gracious God, in his mercy, look down upon a nation so shamefully besotted!

If I am possessed of a hundred pounds a year, and by some misfortune it sinks to fifty, without a possibility of ever being retrieved; does it remain a question, in such an exigency, what I am to do? must not I retrench one half in every article of expense

or retire to some cheap, distant part of the country, where necessaries are at half value?

Is there any mortal who can show me, under the circumstances we stand with our neighbours, under their inclinations towards us, under laws never to be repealed, under the desolation caused by absentees, under many other circumstances not to be mentioned, that this kingdom can ever be a nation of trade, or subsist by any other method than that of a reduced family, by the utmost parsimony, in the manner I have already prescribed?

I am tired with letters from many unreasonable well meaning people, who are daily pressing me to deliver my thoughts in this deplorable juncture; which, upon many others, I have so often done in vain. What will it import, that half a score people in a coffeehouse, may happen to read this paper, and even the majority of those few, differ in every sentiment from me? If the farmer be not allowed to sow his corn, if half the little money among us be sent to pay rents to Irish absentees, and the rest for foreign luxury and dress for the women, what will our charitable dispositions avail, when there is nothing left to be given? when, contrary to all custom and example, all necessaries of life are so exorbitant, when money of all kinds was never known to be so scarce; so that gentlemen of no contemptible estates, are forced to retrench in every article (except what relates to their wives) without being able to show any bounty to the poor?

AN

ANSWER

TO SEVERAL

LETTERS

SENT ME FROM UNKNOWN HANDS,

WRITTEN IN 1729.

I AM very well pleased with the good opinion you express of me; and wish it were any way in my power to answer your expectations, for the service of my country. I have carefully read your several schemes and proposals, which you think should be offered to the parliament. In answer, I will assure you, that in another place, I have known very good proposals rejected with contempt by publick assemblies, merely because they were offered from without doors; and yours perhaps might have the same fate, especially if handed to the publick by me, who am not acquainted with three members, nor have the least interest with one. My printers have been twice prosecuted, to my great expense, on account of discourses I writ for the publick service, without the least reflection on parties or persons; and the success I had in those of the drapier, was not owing to my abilities, but to a lucky juncture, when the fuel was ready for the first

first hand that would be at the pains of kindling it. It is true, both those envenomed prosecutions were the workmanship of a judge, who is now gone to his own place. But, let that be as it will, I am determined, henceforth, never to be the instrument of leaving an innocent man at the mercy of that bench.

It is certain there are several particulars relating to this kingdom, (I have mentioned a few of them in one of my drapier's letters) which it were heartily to be wished that the parliament would take under their consideration, such as will no way interfere with England, otherwise than to its advantage.

The first I shall mention, is touched at in a letter which I received from one of you, gentlemen, about the highways; which, indeed, are almost every where scandalously neglected. I know a very rich man in this city, a true lover and saver of his money, who, being possessed of some adjacent lands, has been at great charge in repairing effectually the roads that lead to them; and has assured me, that his lands are thereby advanced four or five shillings an acre, by which he gets treble interest. But, generally speaking, all over the kingdom, the roads are deplorable; and what is more particularly barbarous, there is no sort of provision made for travellers on foot; no, not near the city, except in a very few places, and in a most wretched manner: whereas the English are so particularly careful in this point, that you may travel there a hundred miles with less inconvenience than one mile here. But, since this may be thought too great a reformation, I shall only speak of roads for horses, carriages, and cattle.

Ireland is, I think, computed to be one third smaller than England; yet, by some natural disad-

vantages, it would not bear quite the same proportion in value, with the same encouragement. However, it has so happened, for many years past, that it never arrived to above one eleventh part in point of riches; and of late, by the continual decrease of trade, and increase of absentees, with other circumstances not here to be mentioned, hardly to a fifteenth part; at least, if my calculations be right, which I doubt are a little too favourable on our side.

Now, supposing day labour to be cheaper by one half here than in England, and our roads, by the nature of our carriages and the desolation of our country, to be not worn and beaten above one eighth part so much as those of England, which is a very moderate computation: I do not see why the mending of them, would be a greater burden to this kingdom, than to that.

There have been, I believe, twenty acts of parliament, in six or seven years of the late king, for mending long tracts of impassable ways in several counties of England, by erecting turnpikes, and receiving passage money in a manner that every body knows. If what I have advanced be true, it would be hard to give a reason against the same practice here; since the necessity is as great, the advantage, in proportion, perhaps much greater, the materials of stone and gravel as easy to be found, and the workmanship at least twice as cheap. Besides, the work may be done gradually, with allowances for the poverty of the nation, by so many perch a year; but with a special care to encourage skill and diligence, and to prevent fraud in the undertakers, to which we are too liable, and which are not always confined to those of the meaner sort: but against these,

these, no doubt, the wisdom of the nation may, and will provide.

Another evil, which, in my opinion, deserves the publick care, is the ill management of the bogs; the neglect whereof is a much greater mischief to this kingdom than most people seem to be aware of.

It is allowed indeed, by those who are esteemed most skilful in such matters, that the red swelling mossy bog, whereof we have so many large tracts in this island, is not by any means to be fully reduced, but the skirts, which are covered with a green coat, easily may, being not accretion, or annual growth of moss, like the other.

Now the landlords are generally so careless as to suffer their tenants to cut their turf in these skirts, as well as the bog adjoined; whereby there is yearly lost a considerable quantity of land throughout the kingdom, never to be recovered.

But this is not the greatest part of the mischief: for the main bog, although perhaps not reducible to natural soil; yet, by continuing large, deep, straight canals through the middle, cleaned at proper times, as low as the channel or gravel, would become secure summer pasture; the margins might, with great profit and ornament, be filled with quickens, birch, and other trees proper for such a soil, and the canals be convenient for water carriage of the turf, which is now drawn upon sled cars with great expense, difficulty, and loss of time, by reason of the many turfpits scattered irregularly through the bog, wherein great numbers of cattle are yearly drowned. And it has been, I confess, to me a matter of the greatest vexation, as well as wonder, to think how any

landlord could be so absurd as to suffer such havock to be made.

All the acts for encouraging plantations of forest-trees are, I am told, extremely defective; which, with great submission, must have been owing to a defect of skill in the contrivers of them. In this climate, by the continual blowing of the west-south-west wind, hardly any tree of value will come to perfection that is not planted in groves, except very rarely, and where there is much land-shelter. I have not, indeed, read all the acts; but from inquiry, I cannot learn that the planting in groves is enjoined. And as the effects of these laws, I have not seen the least, in many hundred miles riding, except about a very few gentlemen's houses, and even those with very little skill or success. In all the rest, the hedges generally miscarry, as well as the larger slender twigs planted upon the tops of ditches, merely for want of common skill and care.

I do not believe that a greater and quicker profit could be made, than by planting large groves of ash, a few feet asunder, which in seven years would make the best kind of hop poles, and grow in the same or less time, to a second crop from their roots.

It would likewise be of great use and beauty in our desert scenes, to oblige cottagers to plant ash or elm before their cabins, and round their potatoe gardens, where cattle either do not or ought not to come to destroy them.

The common objection against all this, drawn from the laziness, the perverseness, or thievish disposition, of the poor native Irish, might be easily answered.

answered, by showing the true reasons for such accusations, and how easily those people may be brought to a less savage manner of life: but my printers have already suffered too much for my speculations. However, supposing the size of a native's understanding just equal to that of a dog or a horse, I have often seen those two animals civilized by rewards, at least as much as by punishments.

It would be a noble achievement to abolish the Irish language in this kingdom, so far at least as to oblige all the natives to speak only English, on every occasion of business, in shops, markets, fairs, and other places of dealing: yet I am wholly deceived, if this might not be effectually done in less than half an age, and at a very trifling expense; for such I look upon a tax to be of only six thousand pounds a year, to accomplish so great a work. This would, in a great measure civilize the most barbarous among them, reconcile them to our customs and manner of living, and reduce great numbers to the national religion, whatever kind may then happen to be established. The method is plain and simple; and although I am too desponding to produce it, yet I could heartily wish some publick thoughts were employed to reduce this uncultivated people from that idle, savage, beastly, thievish manner of life, in which they continue sunk to such a degree, that it is almost impossible for a country gentleman to find a servant of human capacity, or the least tincture of natural honesty, or who does not live among his own tenants in continual fear of having his plantations destroyed, his cattle stolen, and his goods pilfered.

The love, affection, or vanity of living in England,

[illegible] so many wealthy [illegible] together with [illegible] what is detrimental [illegible] such great numbers of wealthy [illegible] to seek their bread in foreign [illegible] the unhappy practice of stocking such [illegible] with sheep and other cattle, [illegible] : these events, [illegible] this kingdom [illegible] nearly wish, therefore [illegible] that [illegible] would think it advisable [illegible] thousand pounds a year, [illegible] in this kingdom, to feed us [illegible] more unconstitutional [illegible] of all wise nations, [illegible] And therefore [illegible] which [illegible] I am by no [illegible] If power and permit make the true [illegible] what must be the issue, where [illegible] are forced away, and the [illegible]

If [illegible] wiser heads, [illegible] might be applied to in a national [illegible] giving the kingdom leave to coin half-[illegible] I believe no good subject [illegible] the least apprehension that such a [illegible] would meet with refusal, or the least delay. [illegible] we are the only kingdom upon earth, or [illegible] which did not [illegible] right of civil society, under the [illegible] of its prince or legislature, to [illegible] money of all usual metals for its own occa-

sion.

sion. Every petty prince in Germany, vassal to the emperor, enjoys this privilege. And I have seen in this kingdom several silver pieces, with the inscription of CIVITAS WATERFORD, DROGHEDAGH, and other towns.

THE

SUBSTANCE

OF WHAT WAS SAID BY

THE DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S

TO

THE LORD MAYOR AND SOME OF THE ALDERMEN OF DUBLIN.

WHEN HIS LORDSHIP CAME TO PRESENT THE SAID DEAN WITH HIS FREEDOM IN A GOLD BOX.

WHEN his lordship had said a few words, and presented the instrument, the dean gently put it back, and desired first to be heard. He said, "He "was much obliged to his lordship and the city for "the honour they were going to do him; and which, "as he was informed, they had long intended him: "That it was true, this honour was mingled with a "little mortification, by the delay which attended "it; but which, however, he did not impute to "his lordship or the city: and that the mortification "was the less, because he would willingly hope the "delay was founded on a mistake; for which opi "nion he would tell his reason." He said, "I "wa

" was well known, that some time ago, a person
" with a title was pleased, in two great assemblies,
" to rattle bitterly somebody without a name, under
" the injurious appellations of a tory, a jacobite, an
" enemy to king George, and a libeller of the go-
" vernment; which character," the dean said, " many
" people thought was applied to him: but he was
" unwilling to be of that opinion, because the per-
" son who had delivered those abusive words had,
" for several years, caressed and courted and soli-
" cited his friendship, more than any man in either
" kingdom had ever done; by inviting him to his
" house in town and country, by coming to the
" deanery often, and calling or sending almost every
" day when the dean was sick, with many other
" particulars of the same nature, which continued
" even to a day or two of the time, when the said
" person made those invectives in the council and
" house of lords. Therefore, that the dean would
" by no means think those scurrilous words could
" be intended against him; because such a pro-
" ceeding would overthrow all the principles of ho-
" nour, justice, religion, truth, and even common
" humanity. Therefore the dean will endeavour to
" believe, that the said person had some other ob-
" ject in his thoughts; and it was only the un-
" charitable custom of the world that applied this
" character to him. However, that he would insist
" on this argument no longer: but one thing he
" would affirm and declare, without assigning any
" name or making any exception, That, whoever
" either did, or does, or shall hereafter at any time,
" charge him with the character of a jacobite, an
" enemy to king George, or a libeller of the govern-
" ment,

" ment, the said accusation was, is, and will be,
" false, malicious, slanderous, and altogether ground-
" less. And he would take the freedom to tell
" his lordship, and the rest that stood by, that
" he had done more service to the Hanover title,
" and more disservice to the pretender's cause,
" than forty thousand of those noisy, railing, mali-
" cious, empty zealots, to whom nature has denied
" any talent that could be of use to God or their
" country, and left them only the gift of reviling,
" and spitting their venom, against all who differ
" from them in their destructive principles, both
" in church and state. That he confessed, it was
" sometimes his misfortune to dislike some things
" in publick proceedings in both kingdoms, where-
" in he had often the honour to agree with wise and
" good men; but this did by no means affect either
" his loyalty to his prince, or love to his country.
" But, on the contrary, he protested that such dis-
" likes, never arose in him from any other princi-
" ples, than the duty he owed to the king, and his
" affection to the kingdom. That he had been ac-
" quainted with courts and ministers long enough,
" and knew too well that the best ministers might
" mistake in points of great importance; and that he
" had the honour to know many more able, and at
" least full as honest, as any can be at present."
The dean farther said, " That since he had been
" so falsely represented, he thought it became him
" to give some account of himself for above twenty
" years, if it were only to justify his lordship and
" the city for the honour they were going to do
" him." He related briefly how, " merely by his
" own personal credit, without other assistance, and

" in

" in two journeys at his expense, he had procured a " grant of the first-fruits to the clergy, in the late " queen's time; for which he thought he deserved " some gentle treatment from his brethren. That, " during all the administration of the said ministry, " he had been a constant advocate for those who are " called the whigs; had kept many of them in their " employments, both in England and here, and some " who were afterward the first to lift up their heels " against him." He reflected a little upon the severe treatment he had met with upon his return to Ireland after her majesty's death, and for some years after: " That, being forced to live retired, he could " think of no better way to do publick service, than " by employing all the little money he could save, " and lending it, without interest, in small sums, to " poor industrious tradesmen, without examining " their party or their faith. And God had so far " pleased to bless his endeavours, that his mana- " gers tell him he has recovered above two hundred " families in this city from ruin, and placed most " of them in a comfortable way of life." The dean related how much he had suffered in his purse, and with what hazard to his liberty, by a most iniquitous judge; who, to gratify his ambition and rage of party, had condemned an innocent book, written with no worse a design, than to persuade the people of this kingdom to wear their own manufactures. How the said judge had endeavoured to get a jury to his mind; but they proved so honest, that he was forced to keep them eleven hours, and send them back nine times, until at last they were compelled to leave the printer to the mercy of the court; and the dean was forced to procure a *noli prosequi* from a

noble

noble person, then secretary of state, who had been his old friend. The dean then freely confessed himself to be the author of those books called "The "Drapier's Letters;" and spoke gently of the proclamation, offering three hundred pounds to discover the writer. He said, "That although a certain "person was pleased to mention those books in a "slight manner at a publick assembly, yet he (the "dean) had learned to believe, that there were ten "thousand to one in the kingdom who differed "from that person: and the people of England, "who had ever heard of the matter, as well as in "France, were all of the same opinion." The dean mentioned several other particulars, some of which those from whom I had the account could not recollect, and others, although of great consequence, perhaps his enemies would not allow him. The dean concluded with acknowledging to have expressed his wishes, that an inscription might have been graven on the box, showing some reason why the city thought fit to do him that honour, which was much out of the common forms to a person in a private station; those distinctions being usually made only to chief governors, or persons in very high employments.

THE

SWEARER'S BANK:

OR

PARLIAMENTARY SECURITY FOR ESTABLISHING A NEW BANK IN IRELAND.

WHEREIN THE MEDICAL USE OF OATHS IS CONSIDERED*.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1720.

Si Populus vult decipi, decipiatur.

"TO believe every thing that is said by a certain "set of men, and to doubt of nothing they relate, "though ever so improbable," is a maxim that has contributed as much, for the time, to the support of Irish banks, as it ever did to the popish religion; and they are not only beholden to the latter for their foundation, but they have the happiness to have the same patron saint; for, ignorance, the reputed mother of the devotion of one, seems to bear the same affectionate relation to the credit of the other.

To subscribe to banks, without knowing the scheme

* See an Essay upon English Bubbles in the eighteenth volume of this edition.

OF

or design of them, is not unlike to some gentlemen's signing addresses without knowing the contents of them: To engage in a bank that has neither act of parliament, charter, nor lands to support it, is like sending a ship to sea without a bottom; to expect a coach and six by the former, would be as ridiculous as to hope a return by the latter.

It was well known some time ago, that our banks would be included in the bubble bill; and it was believed those chimeras would necessarily vanish, with the first easterly wind that should inform the town of the royal assent.

It was very mortifying to several gentlemen, who dreamed of nothing but easy chariots, on the arrival of the fatal packet, to slip out of them into their walking shoes. But should those banks, as it is vainly imagined, be so fortunate as to obtain a charter, and purchase lands; yet, on any run on them in a time of invasion, there would be so many starving proprietors, reviving their old pretensions to land and a bellyful, that the subscribers would be unwilling, upon any call, to part with their money, not knowing what might happen; so that in a rebellion, where the success was doubtful, the bank would infallibly break.

Since so many gentlemen of this town have had the courage, without any security, to appear in the same paper with a million or two; it is hoped, when they are made sensible of their safety, that they will be prevailed to trust themselves in a neat skin of parchment, with a single one.

To encourage them, the undertaker proposes the erecting of a bank on parliamentary security, and such

such security as no revolution or change of times can effect.

To take away all jealousy of any private view of the undertaker, he assures the world, that he is now in a garret, in a very thin waistcoat, studying the publick good; having given an undeniable pledge of his love to his country, by pawning his coat, in order to defray the expense of the press.

It is very well known, that by an act of parliament to prevent profane swearing, the person so offending, on oath made before a magistrate, forfeits a shilling, which may be levied with little difficulty.

It is almost unnecessary to mention, that this is become a pet-vice* among us; and though age renders us unfit for other vices, yet this, where it takes hold, never leaves us but with our speech.

So vast a revenue might be raised by the execution of this act, that I have often wondered, in a scarcity of funds, that methods have not been taken to make it serviceable to the publick.

I dare venture to say, if this act was well executed in England, the revenue of it, applied to the navy, would make the English fleet a terrour to all Europe.

It is computed by geographers, that there are two millions in this kingdom (of Ireland) of which number there may be said to be a million of swearing souls.

It is thought there may be five thousand gentlemen; every gentleman, taking one with another, may afford to swear an oath every day, which will

* i. e. A favourite vice.

yearly produce one million eight hundred twenty-five thousand oaths; which number of shillings makes the yearly sum of ninety-one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds.

The farmers of this kingdom, who are computed to be ten thousand, are able to spend yearly five hundred thousand oaths, which gives twenty-five thousand pounds; and it is conjectured, that from the bulk of the people, twenty or five and twenty thousand pounds may be yearly collected.

These computations are very modest, since it is evident that there is a much greater consumption of oaths in this kingdom, and consequently a much greater sum might be yearly raised.

That it may be collected with ease and regularity, it is proposed to settle informers in great towns, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, and to have riding officers in the country: and since nothing brings a greater contempt on any profession than poverty, it is determined to settle very handsome salaries on the gentlemen that are employed by the Bank, that they may, by a generosity of living, reconcile men to an office, that has lain under so much scandal of late, as to be undertaken by none but curates, clerks of meeting-houses, and broken tradesmen.

It is resolved, that none shall be preferred to those employments, but persons that are notorious for being constant churchmen, and frequent communicants; whose piety will be a sufficient security for their honest and industrious execution of their office.

It is very probable, that twenty thousand pounds will be necessary, to defray all expenses of servants, salaries,

. However, there will be the clear
of one hundred thousand pounds, which
very justly claim a million subscription.

It is determined to lay out the remaining unapplied profits, which will be very considerable, toward the erecting and maintaining of charity schools. A design so beneficial to the publick, and especially to the protestant interest of this kingdom, has met with so much encouragement from several great patriots in England, that they have engaged to procure an act to secure the sole benefit of informing, on this swearing act, to the agents and servants of this new bank. Several of my friends pretend to demonstrate, that this bank will in time vie with the South Sea company: they insist, that the army dispend as many oaths yearly as will produce one hundred thousand pounds nett.

There are computed to be one hundred pretty fellows in this town, that swear fifty oaths a head daily; some of them would think it hard to be stinted to a hundred: this very branch would produce a vast sum yearly.

The FAIRS of this kingdom will bring in a vast revenue; the oaths of a little Connaught one, as well as they could be numbered by two persons, amounted to three thousand. It is true, that it would be impossible to turn all of them into ready money; for a shilling is so great a duty on swearing, that if it was carefully exacted, the common people might as well pretend to drink wine as to swear; and an oath would be as rare among them as a clean shirt.

A servant, that I employed to accompany the militia their last muster day, had scored down, in the

compass of eight hours, three hundred oaths; but, as the putting of the act in execution on those days would only fill the stocks with porters, and pawnshops with muskets and swords; and as it would be matter of great joy to papists, and disaffected persons, to see our militia swear themselves out of their guns and swords; it is resolved that no advantage shall be taken of any militia man's swearing while he is under arms; nor shall any advantage be taken of any man's swearing in the four courts, provided he is at hearing in the exchequer, or has just paid off an attorney's bill.

The medicinal use of oaths is what the undertaker would by no means discourage, especially where it is necessary to help the lungs to throw off any distilling humour. On certificate of a course of swearing prescribed by any physician, a permit will be given to the patient, by the proper officer of the bank, paying no more than sixpence. It is expected, that a scheme of so much advantage to the publick will meet with more encouragement than their chimerical banks; and the undertaker hopes, that as he has spent a considerable fortune in bringing this scheme to bear, he may have the satisfaction to see it take place, for the publick good, though he should have the fate of most projectors, to be undone.

It is resolved, that no compositions shall be made, nor licenses granted, for swearing, under a notion of applying the money to pious uses; a practice so scandalous as is fit only for the see of Rome, where the money arising from whoring licenses is applied *ad propagandam fidem:* and, to the shame of Smock alley, and of all protestant whores (especially those

who live under the light of the Gospel-ministry) be it spoken, a whore in Rome never lies down, but she hopes it will be the means of converting some poor heathen, or heretick.

The swearing revenues of the town of Cork will be given for ever, by the bank, to the support of poor clergymen's widows; and those of Ringsend will be allowed to the maintenance of sailors bastards.

The undertaker designs, in a few days, to appoint time and place for taking subscriptions; the subscribers must come prepared to pay down one fourth on subscribing.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE jews of Rotterdam have offered to farm the revenues of Dublin at twenty thousand pounds per annum. Several eminent quakers are also willing to take them at that rent; but the undertaker has rejected their proposals, being resolved to deal with none but christians.

Application may be made to him about them, any day, at Pat's coffeehouse, where attendance will be given.

MAXIMS

CONTROLLED

IN IRELAND.

THE TRUTH OF SOME MAXIMS IN STATE AND GOVERNMENT EXAMINED WITH REFERENCE TO IRELAND.

THERE are certain maxims of state, founded upon long observation and experience, drawn from the constant practice of the wisest nations, and from the very principles of government, nor even controlled by any writer upon politicks. Yet all these maxims do necessarily presuppose a kingdom, or commonwealth, to have the same natural rights common to the rest of mankind, who have entered into civil society: for, if we could conceive a nation where each of the inhabitants had but one eye, one leg, and one hand, it is plain, before you could institute them into a republick, that an allowance must be made for those material defects, wherein they differed from other mortals. Or imagine a legislature forming a system for the government of Bedlam, and proceeding upon the maxim that man is a sociable animal, should draw them out of their cells and form them into corporations or general assemblies; the consequence might probably be, that they would fall foul on each other, or burn the house over their own heads.

Of

Of the like nature, are innumerable errours committed by crude and short thinkers, who reason upon general topicks, without the least allowance for the most important circumstances, which quite alter the nature of the case.

This has been the fate of those small dealers, who are every day publishing their thoughts, either on paper or in their assemblies, for improving the trade of Ireland, and referring us to the practice and example of England, Holland, France, or other nations.

I shall therefore examine certain maxims of government, which generally pass for uncontrolled in the world, and consider how far they will suit with the present condition of this kingdom.

First, it is affirmed by wise men, that the dearness of things necessary for life, in a fruitful country, is a certain sign of wealth, and great commerce; for, when such necessaries are dear, it must absolutely follow that money is cheap and plentiful.

But this is manifestly false in Ireland, for the following reason. Some years ago, the species of money here, did probably amount to six or seven hundred thousand pounds; and I have good cause to believe, that our remittances then, did not much exceed the cash brought in to us. But, by the prodigious discouragements we have since received in every branch of our trade, by the frequent enforcements and rigorous execution of the navigation act, the tyranny of under customhouse officers, the yearly addition of absentees, the payments to regiments abroad, to civil and military officers residing in England, the unexpected sudden demands of great sums from the treasury, and some other drains

of perhaps as great consequence, we now see ourselves reduced to a state (since we have no friends) of being pitied by our enemies; at least if our enemies were of such a kind, as to be capable of any regards toward us, except of hatred and contempt.

Forty years are now passed since the revolution, when the contention of the British empire was, most unfortunately for us, and altogether against the usual course of such mighty changes in government, decided in the least important nation; but with such ravages and ruin executed on both sides, as to leave the kingdom a desert, which in some sort it still continues. Neither did the long rebellions in 1641, make half such a destruction of houses, plantations, and personal wealth, in both kingdoms, as two years campaigns did in ours, by fighting England's battles.

By slow degrees, as by the gentle treatment we received under two auspicious reigns, we grew able to live without running in debt. Our absentees were but few: we had great indulgence in trade, and a considerable share in employments of church and state; and while the short leases continued, which were let some years after the war ended, tenants paid their rents with ease and cheerfulness, to the great regret of their landlords, who had taken up a spirit of opposition that is not easily removed. And although, in these short leases, the rent was gradually to increase after short periods; yet as soon as the terms elapsed, the land was let to the highest bidder, most commonly without the least effectual clause for building or planting. Yet, by many advantages, which this island then possessed, and has since utterly lost, the rents of lands still grew higher upon every

every lease that expired, till they have arrived at the present exorbitance; when the frog overswelling himself, burst at last.

With the price of land, of necessity rose that of corn and cattle, and all other commodities that farmers deal in: hence likewise, obviously, the rates of all goods and manufactures among shopkeepers, the wages of servants, and hire of labourers. But, although our miseries came on fast, with neither trade nor money left; yet neither will the landlord abate in his rent, nor can the tenant abate in the price of what that rent must be paid with, nor any shopkeeper, tradesman, or labourer live, at lower expense for food and clothing, than he did before.

I have been the larger upon this first head, because the same observations will clear up and strengthen a good deal of what I shall affirm upon the rest.

The second maxim of those who reason upon trade and government, is, to assert that low interest, is a certain sign of great plenty of money in a nation, for which, as in many other articles, they produce the examples of Holland and England. But, with relation to Ireland, this maxim is likewise entirely false.

There are two reasons for the lowness of interest in any country. First, that which is usually alleged, the great plenty of species; and this is obvious. The second, is want of trade, which seldom falls under common observation, although it be equally true: for, where trade is altogether discouraged, there are few borrowers. In those countries where men can employ a large stock, the young merchant whose fortune may be four or five hundred pounds, will venture to borrow as much more, and can afford a reasonable interest. Neither is it easy at this day, to

to find many of those, whose business reaches to employ even so inconsiderable a sum, except among the importers of wine, who, as they have most part of the present trade in these parts of Ireland in their hands, so they are the most exorbitant, exacting, fraudulent dealers, that ever trafficked in any nation, and are making all possible speed to ruin both themselves and the nation.

From this defect of gentlemen's not knowing how to dispose of their ready money, arises the high purchase of lands, which in all other countries is reckoned a sign of wealth. For, the frugal squires, who live below their incomes, have no other way to dispose of their savings but by mortgage or purchase, by which the rates of land must naturally increase; and if this trade continues long, under the uncertainty of rents, the landed men of ready money will find it more for their advantage to send their cash to England, and place it in the funds; which I myself am determined to do, the first considerable sum I shall be master of.

It has likewise been a maxim among politicians, "That the great increase of buildings in the metro-"polis, argues a flourishing state." But this, I confess, has been controlled from the example of London; when by the long and annual parliamentary session, such a number of senators, with their families, friends, adherents, and expectants, draw such prodigious numbers to that city, that the old hospitable custom of lords and gentlemen living in their ancient seats among their tenants, is almost lost in England; is laughed out of doors; insomuch that in the middle of summer, a legal house of lords and commons might be brought in a few hours to London,

London, from their country villas within twelve miles round.

The case in Ireland is yet somewhat worse: for the absentees of great estates, who, if they lived at home, would have many rich retainers in their neighbourhoods, have learned to rack their lands, and shorten their leases, as much as any residing squire; and the few remaining of those latter, having some vain hope of employments for themselves, or their children, and discouraged by the beggarliness and thievery of their own miserable farmers and cottagers, or seduced by the vanity of their wives, on pretence of their children's education, (whereof the fruits are so apparent) together with that most wonderful, and yet more unaccountable zeal, for a seat in their assembly, though at some years purchase of their whole estates: these, and some other motives, have drawn such concourse to this beggarly city, that the dealers of the several branches of building, have found out all the commodious and inviting places for erecting new houses; while fifteen hundred of the old ones, which is a seventh part of the whole city, are said to be left uninhabited, and falling to ruin. Their method is the same with that which was first introduced by Dr. Barebone at London, who died a bankrupt. The mason, the bricklayer, the carpenter, the slater, and the glazier, take a lot of ground, club to build one or more houses, unite their credit, their stock, and their money; and when their work is finished, sell it to the best advantage they can. But, as it often happens, and more every day, that their fund will not answer half their design, they are forced to undersell it at the first story, and are all reduced to

to beggary. Insomuch that I know a certain fanatick brewer, who is reported to have some hundreds of houses in this town, is said to have purchased the greatest part of them at half value from ruined undertakers; has intelligence of all new houses where the finishing is at a stand, takes advantage of the builder's distress, and, by the advantage of ready money, gets fifty *per cent* at least for his bargain.

It is another undisputed maxim in government, "That people are the riches of a nation;" which is so universally granted, that it will be hardly pardonable to bring it into doubt. And I will grant it to be so far true, even in this island, that if we had the African custom, or privilege, of selling our useles bodies for slaves to foreigners, it would be the most useful branch of our trade, by ridding us of a most unsupportable burden, and bringing us money in the stead. But, in our present situation, at least five children in six who are born, lie a dead weight upon us, for want of employment. And a very skilful computer assured me, that above one half of the souls in this kingdom, supported themselves by begging and thievery; two thirds whereof would be able to get their bread in any other country upon earth. Trade is the only incitement to labour; where that fails, the poorer native must either beg, steal, or starve, or be forced to quit his country. This has made me often wish, for some years past, that instead of discouraging our people from seeking foreign soil, the publick would rather pay for transporting all our unnecessary mortals, whether papists or protestants, to America; as drawbacks are sometimes allowed for exporting commodities,

dities, where a nation is overstocked. I confess myself to be touched with a very sensible pleasure, when I hear of a mortality in any country parish or village, where the wretches are forced to pay for a filthy cabin, and two ridges of potatoes, treble the worth; brought up to steal or beg, for want of work; to whom death would be the best thing to be wished for, on account both of themselves and the publick.

Among all taxes imposed by the legislature, those upon luxury are universally allowed to be the most equitable, and beneficial to the subject; and the commonest reasoner on government, might fill a volume with arguments on the subject. Yet here again, by the singular fate of Ireland, this maxim is utterly false; and the putting of it in practice may have such a pernicious consequence, as, I certainly believe, the thoughts of the proposers were not able to reach.

The miseries we suffer by our absentees, are of a far more extensive nature, than seems to be commonly understood. I must vindicate myself to the reader so far, as to declare solemnly, that what I shall say of those lords and squires, does not arise from the least regard I have for their understandings, their virtues, or their persons: for, although I have not the honour of the least acquaintance with any one among them, (my ambition not soaring so high) yet I am too good a witness of the situation they have been in for thirty years past; the veneration paid them by the people, the high esteem they are in among the prime nobility and gentry, the particular marks of favour and distinction they receive from the court; the weight and consequence of

of their interest, added to their great zeal anc plication for preventing any hardships their co migh suffer from England, wisely considering their own fortunes and honours were embarke the same bottom.

The following piece was published in the year 1733; *and, as it may be useful upon a like occasion, we think proper to insert it here.*

ADVICE

TO THE

FREEEMEN OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN,

IN THE CHOICE OF A MEMBER TO REPRESENT THEM IN PARLIAMENT.

THOSE few writers, who, since the death of alderman Burton, have employed their pens in giving advice to our citizens, how they should proceed in electing a new representative for the next sessions, having laid aside their pens; I have reason to hope, that all true lovers of their country in general, and particularly those who have any regard for the privileges and liberties of this great and ancient city, will think a second, and a third time, before they come to a final determination upon what person they resolve to fix their choice.

I am told, there are only two persons who set up for candidates; one is the present lord mayor*, and the other†, a gentleman of good esteem, an alder-

* Humphry French. † John Macarall.

man

man of the city, a merchant of reputation, and possessed of a considerable office under the crown. The question is, which of these two persons it will be most for the advantage of the city to elect? I have but little acquaintance with either, so that my inquiries will be very impartial, and drawn only from the general character and situation of both.

In order to this, I must offer my countrymen and fellow citizens some reasons why I think they ought to be more than ordinarily careful at this juncture, upon whom they bestow their votes.

To perform this with more clearness, it may be proper to give you a short state of our unfortunate country.

We consist of two parties, I do not mean popish and protestant, high and low church, episcopal and sectarians, whig and tory; but of those of English extraction, who happen to be born in this kingdom, (whose ancestors reduced the whole nation under the obedience of the English crown) and the gentlemen sent from the other side, to possess most of the chief employments here: this latter party is very much enlarged and strengthened by the whole power in the church, the law, the army, the revenue, and the civil administration deposited in their hands: although for political ends, and to save appearances, some employments are still distributed (yet gradually in a smaller number) to persons born here: this proceeding, fortified with good words and many promises, is sufficient to flatter and feed the hopes of hundreds, who will never be one farthing the better, as they might easily be convinced, if they were qualified to think at all.

Civil employments of all kinds have been for several

several years past, with great prudence, made precarious, and during pleasure; by which means the possessors are, and must inevitably be, for ever dependant: yet those very few of any consequence, which being dealt with so sparing a hand to persons born among us, are enough to keep hope alive in great numbers, who desire to mend their condition by the favour of those in power.

Now, my dear fellow citizens, how is it possible you can conceive, that any person, who holds an office of some hundred pounds a year, which may be taken from him whenever power shall think fit, will, if he should be chosen a member for any city, do the least thing when he sits in the house, that he knows or fears may be displeasing to those who gave him, or continue him in that office? Believe me, these are not times to expect such an exalted degree of virtue from mortal men. Blazing stars are much more frequently seen than such heroical worthies. And I could sooner hope to find ten thousand pounds by digging in my garden, than such a phœnix, by searching among the present race of mankind.

I cannot forbear thinking it a very erroneous, as well as modern maxim of politicks, in the English nation, to take every opportunity of depressing Ireland; whereof a hundred instances may be produced in points of the highest importance, and within the memory of every middle aged man: although many of the greatest persons among that party which now prevails, have formerly, upon that article, much differed in their opinion from their present successors.

But so the fact stands at present. It is plain, that

the court and country party here (I mean in the house of commons) very seldom agree in any thing but their loyalty to his present majesty, their resolutions to make him and his viceroy easy in the government, to the utmost of their power, under the present condition of the kindgom. But the persons sent from England, who (to a trifle) are possessed of the sole executive power in all its branches, with their few adherents in possession who were born here, and hundreds of expectants, hopers, and promisees, put on quite contrary notions with regard to Ireland. They count upon a universal submission to whatever shall be demanded; wherein they act safely, because none of themselves except the candidates, feel the least of our pressures.

I remember a person of distinction, some days ago affirmed in a good deal of mixed company, and of both parties, That the gentry from England, who now enjoy our highest employments, of all kinds, can never be possibly losers of one farthing by the greatest calamities that can befal this kingdom, except a plague that would sweep away a million of our hewers of wood, and drawers of water; or an invasion that would fright our grandees out of the kingdom. For this person argued, that while there was a penny left in the treasury, the civil and the military list must be paid; and that the episcopal revenues, which are usually farmed out at six times below the real value, could hardly fail. He insisted farther, that as money diminished, the price of all necessaries for life must of consequence do so too, which would be for the advantage of all persons in employment, as well as of my lords the bishops, and to the ruin of every body else. Among the company

company there wanted not men in office, beside one or two expectants; yet I did not observe any of them disposed to return an answer: but the consequences drawn were these; That the great men in power sent hither from the other side, were by no means upon the same foot with his majesty's other subjects of Ireland. They had no common ligament to bind them with us; they suffered not with our sufferings, and if it were possible for us to have any cause of rejoicing, they could not rejoice with us.

Suppose a person, born in this kingdom, shall happen by his services for the English interest to have an employment conferred on him worth four hundred pounds a year; and that he has likewise an estate in land worth four hundred pounds a year more; suppose him to sit in parliament; then, suppose a land tax to be brought in of five shillings a pound for ten years; I tell you how this gentleman will compute. He has four hundred pounds a year in land: the tax he must pay yearly is one hundred pounds; by which, in ten years, he will pay only a thousand pounds. But if he gives his vote against this tax, he will lose four thousand pounds by being turned out of his employment, together with the power and influence he has, by virtue or colour of his employment; and thus the balance will be against him three thousand pounds.

I desire, my fellow citizens, you will please to call to mind how many persons you can vouch for among your acquaintance, who have so much virtue and self denial, as to lose four hundred pounds a year for life, together with the smiles and favour of

power, and the hopes of higher advancement, merely out of a generous love of his country.

The contentions of parties in England, are very different from those among us. The battle there is fought for power and riches; and so it is indeed among us: but, whether a great employment be given to Tom or to Peter, they were both born in England, the profits are to be spent there. All employments (except a very few) are bestowed on the natives: they do not send to Germany, Holland, Sweden, or Denmark, much less to Ireland, for chancellors, bishops, judges, or other officers. Their salaries, whether well or ill got, are employed at home: and whatever their morals or politicks be, the nation is not the poorer.

The house of commons in England have frequently endeavoured to limit the number of members, who should be allowed to have employments under the crown. Several acts have been made to that purpose, which many wise men think are not yet effectual enough, and many of them are rendered ineffectual by leaving the power of reelection. Our house of commons consists, I think, of about three hundred members; if one hundred of these should happen to be made up of persons already provided for, joined with expecters, compliers easy to be persuaded, such as will give a vote for a friend who is in hopes to get something; if they be merry companions, without suspicion, of a natural bashfulness, not apt or able to look forward; if good words, smiles, and caresses, have any power over them, the larger part of a second hundred may be very easily brought in at a most reasonable rate.

There

There is an Englishman* of no long standing among us, but in an employment of great trust, power, and profit. This excellent person did lately publish, at his own expense, a pamphlet printed in England by authority, to justify the bill for a general excise, or inland duty, in order to introduce that blessed scheme among us. What a tender care must such an English patriot for Ireland have of our interest, if he should condescend to sit in our parliament? I will bridle my indignation. However, methinks I long to see that mortal, who would with pleasure blow us up all at a blast: but he duly receives his thousand pounds a year; makes his progress like a king; is received in pomp at every town† and village where he travels, and shines in the English newspapers.

I will now apply what I have said to you, my brethren, and fellow citizens. Count upon it, as a truth next to your creed, that no one person in office, of which he is not master for life, whether born here or in England, will ever hazard that office for the good of his country. One of your candidates is of this kind, and I believe him to be an honest gentleman, as the word honest is generally understood. But he loves his employment better than he does you, or his country, or all the countries upon earth. Will you contribute to give him city security to pay him the value of his employment, if it should be taken from him, during his life, for voting on all

* Edward Thompson, esq., member of parliament for York, and a commissioner of the revenue of Ireland.

† Mr. Thompson was presented with the freedom of several corporations in Ireland.

occasions with the honest country party in the house? although I much question, whether he would do it, even upon that condition.

Wherefore, since there are but two candidates, I intreat you will fix on the present lord mayor. He has shown more virtue, more activity, more skill, in one year's government of the city, than a hundred years can equal. He has endeavoured, with great success, to banish frauds, corruptions, and all other abuses from among you.

A dozen such men in power would be able to reform a kingdom. He has no employment under the crown; nor is likely to get or solicit for any; his education having not turned him that way. I will assure for no man's future conduct; but he who has hitherto practised the rules of virtue with so much difficulty in so great and busy a station, deserves your thanks, and the best return you can make him; and you, my brethren, have no other to give him, than that of representing you in parliament. Tell me not of your engagements and promises to another: your promises are sins of inconsideration, at best; and you are bound to repent and annul them. That gentleman, although with good reputation, is already engaged on the other side. He has four hundred pounds a year under the crown, which he is too wise to part with, by sacrificing so good an establishment to the empty names of virtue, and love of his country. I can assure you, the DRAPIER is in the interests of the present lord mayor, whatever you may be told to the contrary. I have lately heard him declare so in publick company, and offer some of these very reasons in defence of his opinion; although

though he has a regard and esteem for the other gentleman, but would not hazard the good of the city and the kingdom for a compliment.

The lord mayor's severity to some unfair dealers, should not turn the honest men among them against him. Whatever he did, was for the advantage of those very traders, whose dishonest members he punished. He has hitherto been above temptation to act wrong; and therefore, as mankind goes, he is the most likely to act right as a representative of your city, as he constantly did in the government of it.

Upon the death of Mr. Stoyte, recorder of the city of Dublin, in the year 1733, several gentlemen declared themselves candidates to succeed him; upon which the dean wrote the following paper, and Eton Stannard, esq. (a gentleman of great worth and honour, and very knowing in his profession) was elected.

SOME

CONSIDERATIONS

HUMBLY OFFERED TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD MAYOR,

THE COURT OF ALDERMEN AND COMMON CONNCIL OF THE HONOURABLE CITY OF DUBLIN, IN THE CHOICE OF A RECORDER.

THE office of recorder to this city being vacant by the death of a very worthy gentleman; it is said, that five or six persons are soliciting to succeed him in the employment. I am a stranger to all their persons, and to most of their characters; which latter, I hope, will at this time be canvassed with more decency, than it sometimes happens upon the like occasions. Therefore, as I am wholly impartial, I can with more freedom deliver my thoughts how the several persons and parties concerned ought to proceed in electing a recorder for this great and ancient city.

And

And first, as it is a very natural, so I can by no means think it an unreasonable opinion, that the sons or near relations of aldermen, and other deserving citizens, should be duly regarded, as proper competitors for an employment in the city's disposal: provided they be equally qualified with other candidates; and provided that such employments require no more than common abilities, and common honesty. But, in the choice of a recorder, the case is entirely different. He ought to be a person of good abilities in his calling; of an unspotted character; an able practitioner; one who has occasionally merited of this city before: he ought to be of some maturity in years; a member of parliament, and likely to continue so; regular in his life; firm in his loyalty to the Hanover succession; indulgent to tender consciences; but, at the same time, a firm adherer to the established church. If he be such a one who has already sat in parliament, it ought to be inquired of what weight he was there: whether he voted on all occasions for the good of his country; and particularly for advancing the trade and freedom of this city: whether he be engaged in any faction, either national or religious: and lastly, whether he be a man of courage; not to be drawn from his duty by the frown or menaces of power, nor capable to be corrupted by allurements or bribes.—These, and many other particulars, are of infinitely more consequence, than that single circumstance of being descended by a direct or collateral line from any alderman, or distinguished citizen, dead or alive.

There is not a dealer or shopkeeper in this city of any substance, whose thriving, less or more, may not depend upon the good or ill conduct of a recorder.

scendent pitch of assurance; and although it may be justly apprehended, that they will do so in time, if these counterfeits shall happen to succeed in their evil designs of passing for real footmen, thereby to render themselves more amiable to the ladies.

Your petitioners do farther allege, that many of the said counterfeits, upon a strict examination, have been found in the act of strutting, staring, swearing, swaggering in a manner that plainly showed their best endeavours to imitate us. Wherein, although they did not succeed, yet by their ignorant and ungainly way of copying our graces, the utmost indignity was endeavoured to be cast upon our whole profession.

Your petitioners do therefore make it their humble request, that this honourable house (to many of whom your petitioners are nearly allied) will please to take this grievance into your most serious consideration: humbly submitting, whether it would not be proper, that certain officers might, at the publick charge, be employed to search for, and discover all such counterfeit footmen; to carry them before the next justice of peace, by whose warrant, upon the first conviction, they shall be stripped of their coats and oaken ornaments, and be set two hours in the stocks; upon the second conviction, beside stripping, be set six hours in the stocks with a paper pinned on their breasts signifying their crime in large capital letters, and in the following words: "A. B. commonly called A. B. esq., "a toupee, and a notorious impostor, who presumed "to personate a true Irish footman."

And for any other offence, the said toupee shall be committed to Bridewell, whipped three times, forced to hard labour for a month, and not to be set

at

at liberty till he shall have given sufficient security for his good behaviour.

Your honours will please to observe, with what lenity we propose to treat these enormous offenders, who have already brought such a scandal on our honourable calling, that several well meaning people have mistaken them to be of our fraternity, in diminution to that credit and dignity whereby we have supported our station, as we always did, in the worst of times. And we farther beg leave to remark, that this was manifestly done with a seditious design to render us less capable of serving the publick in any great employments, as several of our fraternity, as well as our ancestors, have done.

We do therefore humbly implore your honours to give necessary orders for our relief in this present exigency, and your petitioners (as in duty bound) shall ever pray, &c.

A PROPOSAL

A

PROPOSAL

FOR

GIVING BADGES TO THE BEGGARS IN ALL THE PARISHES OF DUBLIN.

BY THE DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1737.

IT has been a general complaint, that the poor-house (especially since the new constitution by act of parliament) has been of no benefit to this city, for the ease of which it was wholly intended. I had the honour to be a member of it many years before it was new modelled by the legislature; not from any personal regard, but merely as one of the two deans, who are of course put into most commissions that relate to the city; and I have likewise the honour to have been left out of several commissions upon the score of party, in which my predecessors time out of mind have always been members.

The first commission was made up of about fifty persons, which were, the lord mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs, and some few other citizens; the judges, the two archbishops, the two deans of the city, and one

or two more gentlemen. And I must confess my opinion, that the dissolving of the old commission, and establishing a new one of near three times the number, have been the great cause of rendering so good a design not only useless, but a grievance instead of a benefit to the city. In the present commission all the city clergy are included, beside a great number of squires; not only those who reside in Dublin and the neighbourhood, but several who live at a great distance, and cannot possibly have the least concern for the advantage of the city.

At the few general meetings, that I have attended since the new establishment, I observed very little was done except one or two acts of extreme justice, which I then thought might as well have been spared; and I have found the court of assistants usually taken up in little wrangles about coachmen, or adjusting accounts of meal and small beer; which however necessary, might sometimes have given place to matters of much greater moment; I mean some schemes recommended to the general board for answering the chief ends in erecting and establishing such a poor house, and endowing it with so considerable a revenue; and the principal end I take to have been that of maintaining the poor and orphans of the city, where the parishes are not able to do it; and clearing the streets from all strollers, foreigners, and sturdy beggars, with which, to the universal complaint and admiration, Dublin is more infested since the establishment of the poor house, than it was ever known to be since its first erection.

As the whole fund for supporting this hospital is raised only from the inhabitants of the city; so there can be hardly any thing more absurd than to see it misemployed

misemployed in maintaining foreign beggars, and bastards, or orphans of farmers, whose country landlords never contributed one shilling toward their support. I would engage, that half this revenue, if employed with common care, and no very great degree of common honesty, would maintain all the real objects of charity in this city, except a small number of original poor in every parish, who might, without being burdensome to the parishioners, find a tolerable support.

I have for some years past applied myself to several lord mayors, and the late archbishop of Dublin, for a remedy to this evil of foreign beggars; and they all appeared ready to receive a very plain proposal, I mean that of badging the original poor of every parish who begged in the streets; that the said beggars should be confined to their own parishes; that they should wear their badges well sown upon one of their shoulders, always visible, on pain of being whipped and turned out of town; or whatever legal punishment may be thought proper and effectual. But, by the wrong way of thinking in some clergymen, and the indifference of others, this method was perpetually defeated, to their own continual disquiet, which they do not ill deserve; and if the grievance affected only them, it would be of less consequence; because the remedy is in their own power: but all streetwalkers and shopkeepers bear an equal share in its hourly vexation.

I never heard more than one objection against this expedient of badging the poor, and confining their walks to their several parishes. The objection was this: What shall we do with the foreign beggars? must they be left to starve? I answered, No; but they

they must be driven or whipped out of town; and let the next country parish do as they please, or rather, after the practice in England, send them from one parish to another, until they reach their own homes. By the old laws of England, still in force, every parish is bound to maintain its own poor; and the matter is of no such consequence in this point as some would make it, whether a country parish be rich or poor. In the remoter and poorer parishes of the kingdom, all necessaries for life proper for poor people are comparatively cheaper; I mean buttermilk, oatmeal, potatoes, and other vegetables; and every farmer or cottager, who is not himself a beggar, can spare sometimes a sup or a morsel, not worth the fourth part of a farthing, to an indigent neighbour of his own parish, who is disabled from work. A beggar native of the parish is known to the squire, to the church minister, to the popish priest, or the conventical teacher, as well as to every farmer: he has generally some relations able to live, and contribute something to his maintenance. None of which advantages can be reasonably expected on a removal to places where he is altogether unknown. If he be not quite maimed, he and his trull, and litter of brats (if he has any) may get half their support by doing some kind of work in their power, and thereby be less burdensome to the people. In short, all necessaries of life grow in the country, and not in cities, and are cheaper where they grow; nor is it equitable that beggars should put us to the charge of giving them victuals, and the carriage too.

But, when the spirit of wandering takes him, attended by his females and their equipage of chil-

dren, he becomes a nuisance to the whole country; he and his females are thieves, and teach the trade of stealing to their brood at four years old; and if his infirmities be counterfeit, it is dangerous for a single person unarmed to meet him on the road. He wanders from one country to another, but still with a view to this town, where he arrives at last, and enjoys all the privileges of a Dublin beggar.

I do not wonder, that the country squires should be very willing to send up their colonies; but why the city should be content to receive them, is beyond my imagination.

If the city were obliged by their charter to maintain a thousand beggars, they could do it cheaper by eighty per cent, a hundred miles off, than in this town, or in any of its suburbs.

There is no village in Connaught, that in proportion shares so deeply in the daily increasing miseries of Ireland, as its capital city; to which miseries there hardly remained any addition, except the perpetual swarms of foreign beggars, who might be banished in a month, without expense, and with very little trouble.

As I am personally acquainted with a great number of street beggars, I find some weak attempts have been made in one or two parishes to promote the wearing of badges; and my first question to those who ask an alms is, "Where is your badge?" I have, in several years, met with about a dozen who were ready to produce them, some out of their pockets, others from under their coat, and two or three on their shoulders, only covered with a sort of capes, which they could lift up or let down upon occasion. They are too lazy to work; they are not afraid to steal,

steal, nor ashamed to beg; and yet are too proud to be seen with a badge, as many of them have confessed to me, and not a few in very injurious terms, particularly the females. They all look upon such an obligation as a high indignity done to their office. I appeal to all indifferent people, whether such wretches deserve to be relieved. As to myself, I must confess, this absurd insolence has so affected me, that for several years past I have not disposed of one single farthing to a street beggar, nor intend to do so until I see a better regulation; and I have endeavoured to persuade all my brother walkers to follow my example, which most of them assure me they do. For, if beggary be not able to beat out pride, it cannot deserve charity. However, as to persons in coaches and chairs, they bear but little of the persecution we suffer, and are willing to leave it entirely upon us.

To say the truth, there is not a more undeserving vicious race of human kind, than the bulk of those who are reduced to beggary, even in this beggarly country. For, as a great part of our publick miseries is originally owing to our own faults (but what those faults are, I am grown by experience too wary to mention) so I am confident, that among the meaner people, nineteen in twenty of those who are reduced to a starving condition, did not become so by what the lawyers call the work of God, either upon their bodies or goods; but merely from their own idleness, attended with all manner of vices, particularly drunkenness, thievery, and cheating.

Whoever inquires, as I have frequently done from those who have asked me an alms, what was their

former course of life, will find them to have been servants in good families, broken tradesmen, labourers, cottagers, and what they call decayed housekeepers; but (to use their own cant) reduced by losses and crosses, by which nothing can be understood but idleness and vice.

As this is the only christian country where people, contrary to the old maxim, are the poverty, and not the riches of the nation; so the blessing of increase and multiply is by us converted into a curse: and, as marriage has been ever countenanced in all free countries, so we should be less miserable if it were discouraged in ours, as far as can be consistent with christianity. It is seldom known in England, that the labourer, the lower mechanick, the servant, or the cottager, thinks of marrying, until he has saved up a stock of money sufficient to carry on his business; nor takes a wife without a suitable portion: and as seldom fails of making a yearly addition to that stock, with a view of providing for his children. But in this kingdom the case is directly contrary; where many thousand couples are yearly married, whose whole united fortunes, bating the rags on their backs, would not be sufficient to purchase a pint of buttermilk for their wedding supper, nor have any prospect of supporting their honourable state, but by service, or labour, or thievery. Nay, their happiness is often deferred until they find credit to borrow, or cunning to steal a shilling to pay their popish priest, or infamous couple-beggar. Surely no miraculous portion of wisdom would be required to find some kind of remedy against this destructive evil, or at least not to draw the consequences of it upon our decaying city,

the greatest part whereof must of course in a few years become desolate or in ruins.

In all other nations, that are not absolutely barbarous, parents think themselves bound by the law of nature and reason, to make some provision for their children; but the reason offered by the inhabitants of Ireland for marrying, is, that they may have children to maintain them when they grow old, and unable to work.

I am informed, that we have been for some time past extremely obliged to England for one very beneficial branch of commerce; for it seems, they are grown so gracious as to transmit us continually colonies of beggars, in return for a million of money they receive yearly from hence. That I may give no offence, I profess to mean real English beggars in the literal meaning of the word, as it is usually understood by protestants. It seems the justices of the peace and parish officers in the western coasts of England, have a good while followed the trade of exporting hither their supernumerary beggars, in order to advance the English protestant interest among us; and these they are so kind as to send over *gratis*, and duty free. I have had the honour more than once to attend large cargoes of them from Chester to Dublin: and I was then so ignorant as to give my opinion, that our city should receive them into Bridewell, and after a month's residence, having been well whipt twice a day, fed with bran and water, and put to hard labour, they should be returned honestly back with thanks, as cheap as they came: or, if that were not approved of, I proposed, that whereas one Englishman is allowed to be of equal intrinsick value with twelve born in Ireland, we should, in justice, return

return them a dozen for one, to dispose of as they please.

As to the native poor of this city, there would be little or no damage in confining them to their several parishes. For instance: a beggar of the parish of St. Warburgh's, or any other parish here, if he be an object of compassion, has an equal chance to receive his proportion of alms from every charitable hand: because the inhabitants, one or other, walk through every street in town, and give their alms, without considering the place, wherever they think it may be well disposed of: and these helps added to what they get in eatables by going from house to house among the gentry and citizens, will, without being very burdensome, be sufficient to keep them alive.

It is true, the poor of the suburb parishes will not have altogether the same advantage, because they are not equally in the road of business and passengers: but here it is to be considered, that the beggars there have not so good a title to publick charity, because most of them are strollers from the country, and compose a principal part of that great nuisance which we ought to remove.

I should be apt to think, that few things can be more irksome to a city minister, than a number of beggars which do not belong to his district; whom he has no obligation to take care of, who are no part of his flock, and who take the bread out of the mouths of those to whom it properly belongs. When I mention this abuse to any minister of a city parish, he usually lays the fault upon the beadles, who, he says, are bribed by the foreign beggars; and, as those beadles often keep alehouses, they find their account in such customers. This evil might easily be

be remedied, if the parishes would make some small addition to the salaries of beadles, and be more careful in the choice of those officers. But I conceive there is one effectual method in the power of every minister to put in practice; I mean, by making it the interest of all his own original poor to drive out intruders; for, if the parish beggars were absolutely forbidden by the minister and church officers to suffer strollers to come into the parish, upon pain of themselves not being permitted to beg alms at the church doors, or at the houses and shops of the inhabitants, they would prevent interlopers more effectually than twenty beadles.

And here I cannot but take notice of the great indiscretion of our city shopkeepers, who suffer their doors to be daily besieged by crowds of beggars (as the gates of a lord are by duns) to the great disgust and vexation of many customers, who I have frequently observed to go to other shops, rather than suffer such a persecution; which might easily be avoided, if no foreign beggars were allowed to infest them.

Wherefore I do assert, that the shopkeepers, who are the greatest complainers of this grievance, lamenting that for every customer they are worried by fifty beggars, do very well deserve what they suffer, when an apprentice with a horsewhip is able to lash every beggar from the shop, who is not of the parish, and does not wear the badge of that parish on his shoulder, well fastened, and fairly visble; and if this practice were universal in every house to all the sturdy vagrants, we should in a few weeks clear the town of all mendicants, except those who have a proper title to our charity: as for the aged and infirm, it would

be sufficient to give them nothing, and then they must starve, or follow their brethren.

It was the city that first endowed this hospital; and those who afterward contributed, as they were such who generally inhabited here, so they intended what they gave to be for the use of the city's poor. The revenues, which have since been raised by parliament, are wholly paid by the city, without the least charge upon any other part of the kingdom; and therefore nothing could more defeat the original design, than to misapply those revenues on strolling beggars or bastards from the country, which bears no share in the charges we are at.

If some of the outparishes be overburdened with poor, the reason must be, that the greatest part of those poor are strollers from the country, who nestle themselves where they can find the cheapest lodgings, and from thence infest every part of the town; out of which they ought to be whipped as a most insufferable nuisance, being nothing else but a profligate clan of thieves, drunkards, heathens, and whoremongers, fitter to be rooted out of the face of the earth, than suffered to levy a vast annual tax upon the city; which shares too deep in the publick miseries, brought on us by the oppressions we lie under from our neighbours, our brethren, our countrymen, our fellow-protestants, and fellow-subjects.

Some time ago I was appointed one of a committee to inquire into the state of the workhouse; where we found that a charity was bestowed by a great person for a certain time, which in its consequences operated very much to the detriment of the house; for, when the time was elapsed, all those who were supported by that charity, continued on the same foot with the

rest

rest on the foundation; and being generally a pack of profligate, vagabond wretches from several parts of the kingdom, corrupted all the rest; so partial, or treacherous, or interested, or ignorant, or mistaken, are generally all recommenders, not only to employments, but even to charity itself.

I know it is complained of, that the difficulty of driving foreign beggars out of the city is charged upon the *bellowers* (as they are called) who find their accounts best in suffering those vagrants to follow their trade through every part of the town. But this abuse might easily be remedied, and very much to the advantage of the whole city, if better salaries were given to those who execute that office in the several parishes, and would make it their interests to clear the town of those caterpillars, rather than hazard the loss of an employment that would give them an honest livelihood. But, if that should fail, yet a general resolution of never giving charity to a street beggar out of his own parish, or without a visible badge, would infallibly force all vagrants to depart.

There is generally a vagabond spirit in beggars, which ought to be discouraged and severely punished. It is owing to the same causes that drove them into poverty; I mean, idleness, drunkenness, and rash marriages, without the least prospect of supporting a family by honest endeavours, which never came into their thoughts. It is observed, that hardly one beggar in twenty looks upon himself to be relieved by receiving bread, or other food; and they have in this town been frequently seen to pour out of their pitchers good broth, that has been given them, into the kennel; neither do they much regard clothes, unless to sell them; for their rags are part of their tools

tools with which they work: they want only ale, brandy, and other strong liquors, which cannot be had without money: and money, as they conceive, always abounds in the metropolis.

I had some other thoughts to offer upon this subject. But as I am a desponder in my nature, and have tolerably well discovered the disposition of our people, who never will move a step toward easing themselves from any one single grievance; it will be thought, that I have already said too much, and to little or no purpose, which has often been the fate or fortune of the writer.

J. SWIFT.

April 22, 1737.

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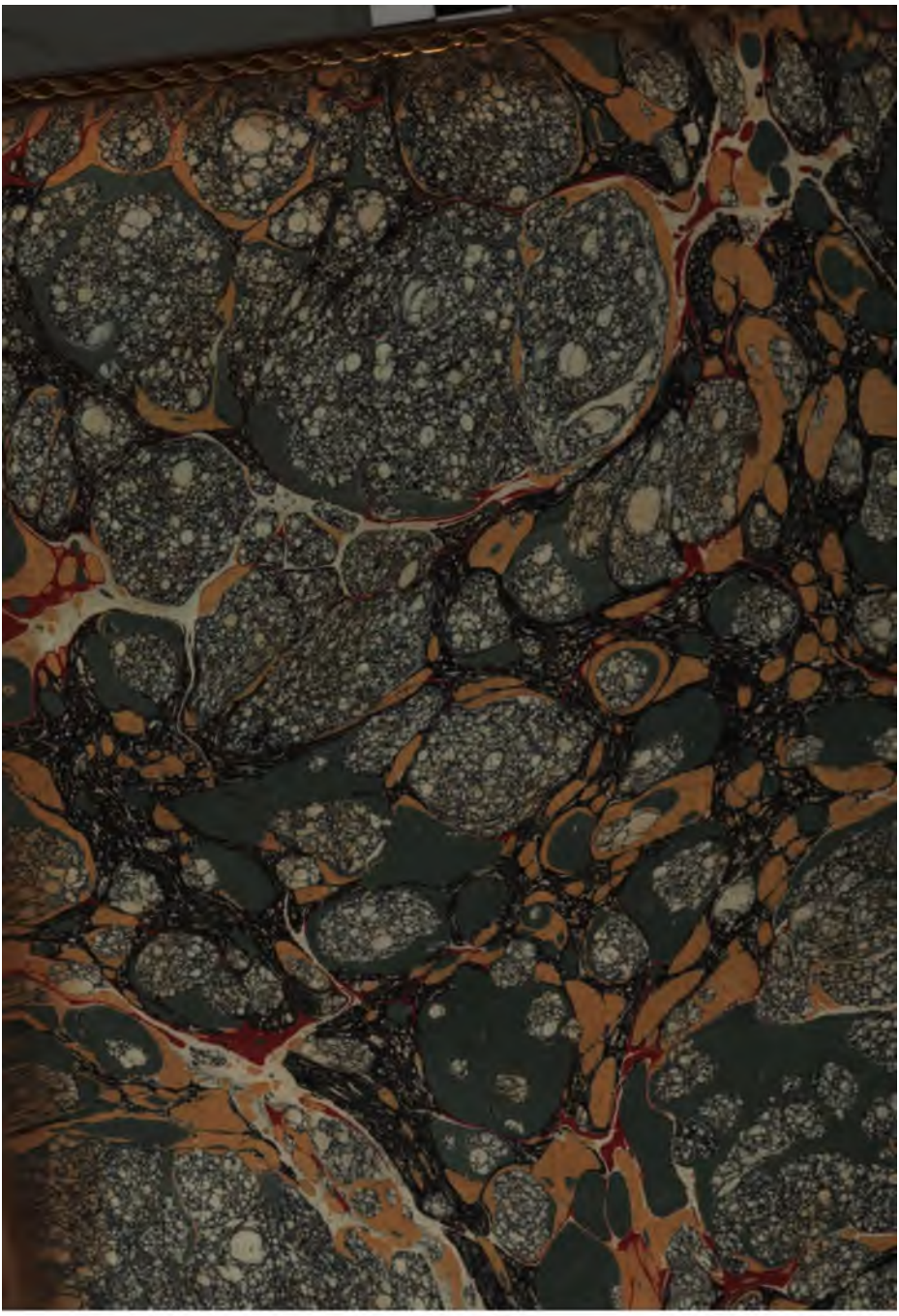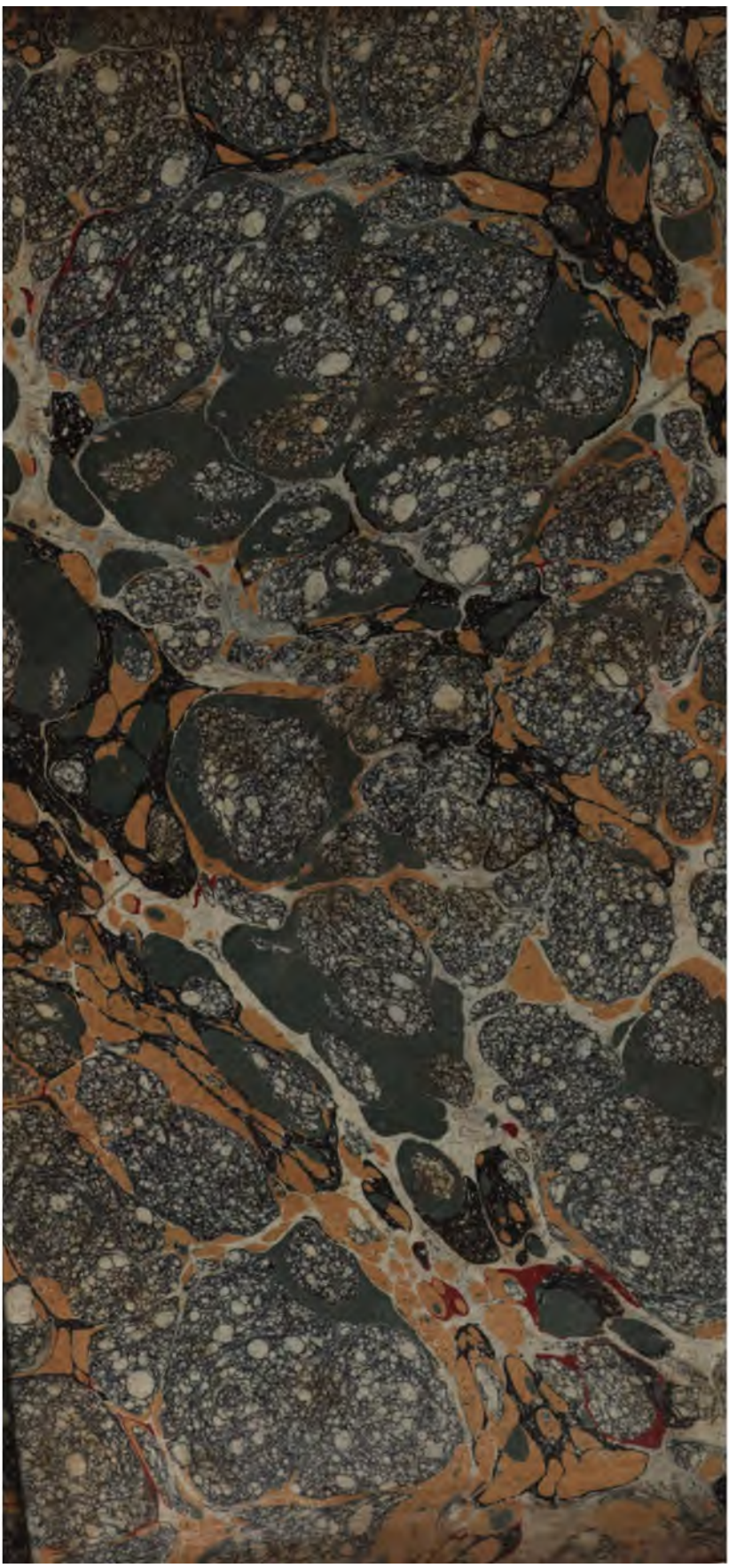
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